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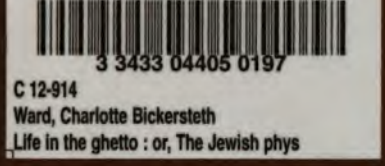
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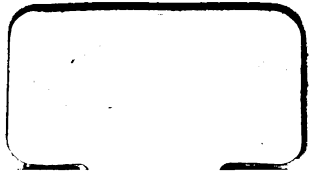

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LIFE IN THE GHETTO.

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"She shall find a mother in me."

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LIFE IN THE GHETTO;

OR,

THE JEWISH PHYSICIAN.

438

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"BROAD SHADOWS IN LIFE'S PATHWAY."

LONDON:
WILLIAM HUNT & COMPANY,
23, HOLLES STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.
1873.

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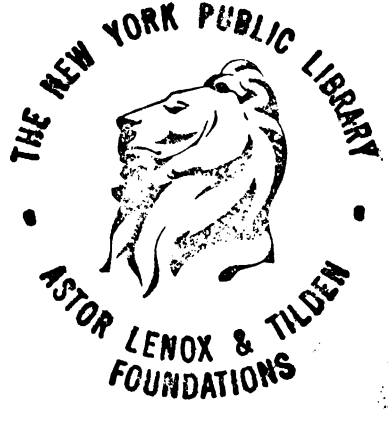

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PREFACE.

THOSE who are accustomed to analyze their impressions, will acknowledge how much both of force and pleasure those impressions owe to the power of contrast. The rugged rock and lofty mountain impress us with their grandeur and stability; but the feeling awakened might be too sombre, too severe, were it not that the sparkling streamlet gushes down their furrowed sides, while ferns clothe every crevice with tender beauty, and delicate harebells vibrate to each passing breath.

The Author of that book which above all others is designed to awaken in us abiding and fruitful impressions, has not disdained to make use of the power of contrast; from the earliest book of the Bible, in which the curtain no sooner falls upon the

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harmonious beauty of the Garden of Eden, than it is raised to disclose a scene of fratricidal hatred and blood,—to the last, in which we are invited to look, now on the throne of the Lamb spanned with its arch of emerald, now on the dragon and his followers suffering their dread and eternal doom; to view side by side the bride in her spotless garments and the bedizened harlot with all her loathsome accompaniments; to listen to the jubilant anthems which rise within the walls of the New Jerusalem while responsive chords are struck on every golden harp; or to catch the sad refrain from despairing hearts in ruined Babylon,—throughout, the power of contrast deepens every impression and brightens every joy.

The Writer has desired to make use of this power in the sketch offered in the following pages, of "The Jew in Rome." She has sought to keep within the limits of truth; for to exaggerate is but to weaken; nor in this case is there any temptation to do so,—the colouring as supplied by the barest facts of history is surely vivid enough; it needs but a limited power of sympathy to be able to appreciate something of the bitterness which must fill the heart of a worthy representative of the chosen and once-

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favoured race of Israel, as he drags along heavily his social fetters and drains the cup of national humiliation in the city of the Popes. Unconscious of the guilt of his forefathers, little deeming that blood-guiltiness of the supremest kind incurred eighteen centuries ago still casts its dark shadow on the chosen race, he sees around him the votaries of creature worship from which his every feeling as a Jew revolts. Yet these, his oppressors, "prosper in the world,—they have more than heart could wish," —while to him "waters of a full cup are wrung out;" what wonder if the cry bursts from him, "Where are Thy mercies towards us, are they restrained? Hath God forgotten to be gracious?"

It has been attempted in these pages to lay to rest in the heart of such a Jew, doubts and questions thus full of anguish,—to show him that "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew," —that in the Divine purpose "Jerusalem shall yet become a praise in the earth;" while of the Babylon that oppressed her it shall be said, "Reward her even as she hath rewarded you; double unto her double according to her works: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

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Yet the Writer has been careful to encourage no delusive hope in God's promise and purpose, apart from Him in whom alone all the promises of God are Yea and Amen; she has endeavoured to show that for the individual Jew, as for the nation at large, all true hope lies enfolded in a believing reception of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah of God.

Jerusalem and Rome, the two great world centres, —contrasts in their origin, in their present position, in their future destiny,—such are the subjects of the following pages.

In the two years which have elapsed since the earliest of them were written, rifts have already appeared in the dark cloud which for so many centuries has hung like a pall over the Jew's social position in Rome, and the triumphs of Victor Emanuel have been to the outcast race the dawning of a better day. It only remains that the sons of Israel should look upon Him whom their fathers pierced, and the Sun of Righteousness shall then arise upon them with healing in His wings.

Among the works which the Writer has read or referred to in the study of her subject, she would gratefully acknowledge the valuable information col-

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lected by W. Story, in his interesting book "Roba di Roma;" especially as to the history of the Jews from the earliest ages of Christianity, for which she is chiefly indebted to him. Weld's "Last Winter in Rome" has also given her material assistance. Hare's "Walks in Rome" has been used as a book of reference. Mills has supplied the details of Jewish manners and customs, and the experiences of the Italian priest Luigi Bianci, have enabled her to realize some of the agonizing struggles through which the intelligent Roman priest must pass before he can disengage himself from the meshes of sophistry and error.

The Writer ventures to solicit the prayers of those to whom the truth as it is in Jesus is dear, that the Great Head of the Church may deign to use these pages for His glory.

Engelberg, Unterwalden,
August, 1872.

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Life in the Ghetto.

CHAPTER I.

A SABBATH EVENING IN ROME—VEXATIONS OF A JEWISH DOCTOR—AN UNWELCOME PATIENT—MORINI'S DANGER—HIS FAMILY LIFE—YEARNINGS OF A MOTHERLESS CHILD.

OUR narrative will lead us back to the early days of Pius the Ninth, the Pope whose reign was initiated by deeds of clemency and liberality which called forth the significant acclamation, "Long live Pio Nono, the first liberal Pope, and the last of the Popes!" The long life sought for him has been accorded; the foot which ascended vigorously the Pontificial throne in 1846, rests there still in infirm old age. Will the prediction also be verified? Time will show.

In what we may relate of the government, or rather misgovernment, of the priest-ruled city, we shall chiefly confine ourselves to that which concerns the Jews of the Ghetto.

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It is Sunday evening in Rome; the season is that of early May; the morning had been sultry, but towards noon a dashing thunder-storm had cooled the air, and the wind blowing steadily from the west, had brought with it an invigorating freshness from the Mediterranean. Let us mingle for a few moments with the crowd of peasants who have gathered in the Piazza Montanara. Is this indeed a Roman Sabbath? Are we really in the city exalted so high in privilege as to be ruled by Christ's Vicar upon earth? We recall the Sabbaths spent by Him whom he represents,—the diligent attendance on synagogue-worship, the laborious efforts to instruct an ignorant crowd, the deeds of mercy at home and abroad, the hours redeemed from sleep for prayer,—is *this* the Sabbath which, under the auspices of Christ's infallible Vicar, has taken root in the Pope's own vineyard? In truth, if it were not treason to breathe such a suspicion within the walls of Rome, we should almost think that we, Protestants and hereties, with no infallible guide, have copied for ourselves, in apostate England, a Sabbath less glaringly unlike the Divine original than that which we see around us in the Piazza Montanara.

It is the season when the peasants come down from the mountain to plough and sow the Campagna. They are hired by the week, and Sunday is the chosen day for renewing old engagements or making fresh ones, with the factors of the great farms, who meet them for this purpose in the Piazza. Here too

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they enjoy their Sunday holiday, attend their cheap theatres provided for them at least twice in the day, make their bargains and purchases, lounge in the sun, pass the merry jest, do everything but "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy."

Our eye had not long wandered with mingled admiration and regret from group to group of these careless children of the sunny south, before our attention was arrested by two pedestrians who were advancing towards us from the opposite corner of the Piazza. It needed but a glance to tell that they were father and son, and already, before they bend their steps to the corner of the Piazza which leads to the Ghetto, we have mentally concluded that they are Jews: not indeed Jews of the ordinary type, who form the vast majority of the inhabitants of the Ghetto. We have here no servile cringing, no stereotyped cunning, no imbruted physiognomy, no greasy squalor in person or dress. Lines of deep thought are written on the brow of the father, and a touching expression of patient endurance contrasts strangely with the fire of his kindling eye, and the firmness expressed in his finely cut mouth; it was the air of one who had achieved the greatest of all victories,—the victory over himself. The youthful countenance of the son was chiefly remarkable for its extreme guilelessness, and the gracious and graceful deference with which he hung upon his father's words.

Their conversation was apparently not yet concluded, neither was it intended for the public ear;

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for, with a glance at the crowds whom they must soon overtake, they stood still under the deep shadow cast by the setting sun from a projecting building, and in lowered tones, Ben Ezra Luppino, a Jewish physician of high celebrity in the Ghetto, and greatly respected by many Roman families without its precincts, thus addressed his son:—

"To-morrow, then, Adriel, you take your place among the students of the University, to show, I hope, that your father has laid a groundwork of knowledge for abler hands to build upon."

Adriel's clear brow became clouded, and the colour mounted to his forehead; an expression of impatient disgust rose to his lips, and was with difficulty repressed.

"How now, my son: you were surely content with the reception given to us by His Eminence. Let me tell you, Adriel, that when at your age I presented myself to the Cardinal Vicar of that day, the favour was thrown to me as churlishly as one may throw a bone to a dog; but our good Contessa loves our little Zillah, and she has the ear of His Eminence. Besides, blessed be the God of Israel, who has disposed towards us the heart of our sovereign Pontiff, we are fallen upon better times, and our bondage is lightened."

"But why must there be bondage at all, father? Why this hateful restriction to which I have just bound myself by solemn oath, that my healing art shall never be exercised on a Christian? Must we

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be always fettered and hedged in? And what is this liberty we have rejoiced in? Is it not every day becoming more of a shadow? My good, noble father, how patiently you have preferred your suit to be permitted to exchange our close quarters in the Ghetto, for a house and a situation suited to your fame and fortune. Is not the request in strict accordance with the privileges they have professed to grant us? Why are you thus vexed with endless delay, and threatened with denial?"

It was now Ben Ezra's turn to struggle with his feelings, for it had been hard to bear with calmness the irritating opposition to his wishes in the matter of a change of residence. None had hailed more eagerly than he, the permission to the Jews to hire houses beyond the limits of the Ghetto, granted in the first years of Pius IX. He hailed it less for the reason assigned by Adriel, than because to its damp and noxious atmosphere he attributed the failing health of his beloved Deborah, the wife of his youth, and the mother of his children. All had been as he hoped settled, and the rental agreed upon of a house in an airy situation; but he would have become the next door neighbour of a Roman Catholic proprietor, who considered the proximity of a Jewish physician as a degradation, and commenced a vexatious opposition, which the Cardinal Vicar, by whose individual caprice all such questions must be settled, was not likely to decide in favour of a Jew, against a son of the Church.

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He looked up, and caught the level rays of the sinking sun. Every window in the Piazza which reflected its beams, flashed back a crimson light; each irregular building was transfigured into a golden palace; light clouds were hurrying to the west, to steep in gorgeous dyes their fleecy mantles. Ben Ezra gazed, and his eyes grew calm, and the knitted brow relaxed. "The Lord God of Israel reigneth," he said. "He is filled with majesty. Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly, and He fixeth the bounds of my habitation."

"But we must hasten home," he added; and Adriel, touched and calmed, prepared to follow his father. They hastily traversed the Piazza, and with eyes still dazzled by the blaze of western glory, passed under the frowning and irregular mass of building known as the Orsini Palace.

At some ten yards distance, a gentleman stood with his face towards them, and with one hand holding the balustrade. For a moment Ben Ezra supposed him irresolute as to which direction he should take; but as his own rapid strides speedily diminished the distance between them, the fixed eye and impurpled countenance of the stranger, betrayed at once to the educated glance of the physician, that he had been the victim of an apoplectic seizure.

There was one hope: the free and immediate use of the lancet might relieve the engorged brain; and while with one hand Ben Ezra assisted Adriel to support the now staggering form of the unfortunate

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gentleman, with the other he drew forth and opened his pocket-case.

With a sudden revulsion of feeling, he remembered his race, his oath, the fatal restriction which forbade him to exercise the common instincts of humanity. It was a moment of intense humiliation. A crowd was gathering, and gazed in wonder at his helplessness, his irresolution. He would have braved legal consequences, but he held himself bound by the sacredness of an oath; and returning the lancet to his pocket, he wrote a few hurried words on a card, and bade Adriel take it at once to an English physician in the immediate neighbourhood, with whom he was on terms of friendship.

It was hard to have to wait his arrival, and thus draw public attention to the civil disability under which he laboured; but he could not leave the unfortunate stranger in the hands of the ignorant country people around him, and he desired to find some clue as to his name and residence. With the exception of the *scrivano*, or letter-writer, who, attracted by the unusual excitement, had come up with his iron-rimmed spectacles still on his nose, and an half-finished letter left to its fate on his ricketty table in the corner of the Piazza, probably none among the crowd could read or write.

So Ben Ezra waited, and with a heavy weight at his heart, and with fears which grew every moment stronger, that the assistance he could so easily have rendered would arrive too late, he searched the

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pockets of the stranger. Among lottery tickets and other papers which afforded no information, he found at length a letter addressed to Signor Lorenzo Morini, in the Largo dell' Impresa. Dr. Selwyn came up at the same moment, and leaving his son to assist in removing Signor Morini to his house, Ben Ezra withdrew; and passing round the Orsini Palace, reached the Ghetto by the Piazza, so appropriately found at its entrance, the Piazza del Pianto, or the Place of Weeping.

Ere long we may return to him, and seek to interpret some of the feelings with which his heart is overcharged; but we would first outstrip the heavy tread of the bearers, and introduce the reader to the home to which the unfortunate Morini is being conveyed, under the skilled guidance of Dr. Selwyn.

Morini has barely attained to middle life; the heavy half-closed eyes and the stertorous breathing only disguise in part the flexibility, the easy grace stamped both upon his form and features. Humorous, gay, good natured, life was to him in early youth one prolonged pastime. Everywhere received and welcomed, he had found little difficulty in winning the hand and heart of the beautiful Clara Percival, who twenty years ago had come with her father to spend a winter in Rome, leaving behind her a mother and younger members of her family. True, Clara and her father professed another creed; but their Protestanism sat lightly upon them as a loose outer

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garb. And then Lorenzo was "so liberal:" did he not often himself laugh at the priests? and besides, there was much to be said for "mother Church," with her grandeur, and her music, and her purchased pardons, and her convenient vicarious religion. Yes; perhaps after all Lorenzo had the best of it: and, at all events, he and Clara loved each other too well ever to quarrel about such trifles; so she submitted, with no ill grace, to a brilliant betrothal and subsequent marriage, according to Romish rites.

And they did not quarrel,—neither cared enough about their creeds to do so,—and for the short summer day of their married life they lived in unclouded prosperity. Mr. Percival found it hard to understand why his wife should express anything but satisfaction in his reports of Clara's happiness.

On the anniversary of their wedding day, the finishing touch was added to their joy in the birth of a little daughter, and as the honour of the child's being baptized at St. Peter's far outweighed with Clara any question of creed, Lorenzo made immediate arrangements for the performance of the rite with more than ordinary ceremony; for it is not usual in Rome to make much of the baptism of a girl.

A gay convoy attended the infant, as on the lap of her godmother she occupied the seat of honour in the first carriage, her blue ribbons fluttering conspicuously from the window; for blue is the colour of the Virgin, and to her all female children are dedicated.

It was perhaps well for Clara that Roman customs

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require the baptism of a child within forty-eight hours of its birth, thus excluding the mother from the ceremony, for her English nerves might have found it somewhat of an ordeal. Arrived at the church the priest received her babe near the font, accompanied by a little boy who carried a candle, a box of salt, and a vase of oil. He mumbled an indistinct hum of Latin, looking carelessly round him the while, rubbed the oil behind the infant's ears, made the sign of the cross on its forehead, mouth, and breast, thrust his soiled finger covered with dirty salt into its tiny mouth, regardless of its cries of disgust, lifted the stole from his own neck and placed it over that of the child, and finally brought the ceremony to an end by pouring over its head some holy water ladled from the font. The little creature was not easily composed after suffering so many indignities, but as Romish baptism is supposed to exorcise the evil spirit, the friends of the infant take comfort in the thought that they are listening to the cry of remonstrance uttered by the devil in his expulsion.

The interest excited by the beautiful young mother in her daily receptions, made her long for the season of weakness to be over, that she might once more share in the gaieties so congenial to her. Slightly piqued to find that her inability to accompany him would not prevent Lorenzo from taking his own pleasure at a magnificent ball to be given by one of their noble friends, she rose from her couch, dressed

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herself magnificently, and, with beauty rendered still more attractive by the languor of recent weakness, she presented herself prepared to accompany him.

It was the last gay scene in which Clara Morini took part: a chill was followed by fever which attacked the brain, her ravings were piteous to hear, and consciousness only returned in the last hour of mortal weakness. She cast a terrified look upon her husband, but signed a negative to his offer to call for a priest. One gleam of natural affection seemed to kindle in her eye when her child was brought to her side, and Lorenzo thought he caught the words, "My mother will care for my child," but the attempt to speak was broken short by the convulsive sob which marked that the last breath had come.

With all the passion of his nature, Morini mourned his young wife; but the strongest impulses are not the most enduring, and their union, though fond and complete of its kind, had wanted all the deeper and higher elements which render memories indelible and a loss irreparable. Neither was it to be expected that the care of his orphaned babe would long restrain the tastes and habits of a young man so devoted as Lorenzo had been to a life of pleasure. The rare beauty of the child, indeed, and the admiration she excited from strangers, awoke in the young father's heart some feelings of pleasant exultation, and he drew for her a horoscope of a brilliant future in the "beau monde." But this was in the far distance. He could not conceive that as yet his child had any

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claims upon him which might not as well be performed by hirelings. To them, therefore, she was left, and their selection was committed to her godmother, who was herself too much engrossed by society to take any effectual superintendence of her orphan charge.

Years passed on, and the neglected child grew up in a world of her own imaginings. Her father was her hero. His person, his gay laugh, his indulgent fondness in the rare and short seasons he spent with her, were dwelt upon and stored up as treasured memories. Her wistful eyes followed him to the door when he laughingly tore himself from her clinging arms, "to go," as he said, "and make her fortune; for his little Juliet should be a Contessa some day." But with his retreating footsteps her sunshine vanished. Surrounded by toys or books, she yet sat with listless and folded hands, and even an unskilled reader in the human heart might have seen that the sweet child was pining for some one to love: she had no mother, she knew what childhood was never meant to know,—the grief of heart loneliness. It was her misfortune that both instructors and attendants pursued their tasks in a mercenary spirit, and though Juliet was one whose confidence might easily have been won, she needed that the first advances should be made by others.

It was not likely that her father would take any pains to instruct her in a religion he held so loosely himself, yet in name she belonged to the Romish

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Church. On one occasion, when his easy good-nature made it difficult to him to refuse to her anything, he consented to take her with him to the exhibition on Christmas-eve, of the miraculous Bambino, in the Ara Cœli. This is the Bambino, or Holy Child, which, as legend informs us, was carved from a tree on the Mount of Olives, by a Franciscan pilgrim, who having completed his work as far as his carving tools could carry it, lay down to sleep. St. Luke, willing to encourage his pious toil, visited the spot in his sleep, and added the charm of colour to that of form. No wonder that the heavenly limner should have left a virtue in the image. It was found that diseases vanished at the touch of the Santissimo Bambino, to which St. Luke appears to have delegated his own healing power. So firmly fixed is this superstition in the hearts of the people, that to this day the miraculous Bambino is the most popular and the most venerated of Rome's physicians. In the ceremony which takes place on Christmas-eve, he has his part to play in the Ara Cœli, and from that time to the Epiphany he may be said to be "at home;" but at all other seasons he may be had if he is fetched, and he makes his progress in a great tan-coloured coach, surmounted by a vermillion flag, which warns the faithful reverently to bow the knee, or the peasant woman to cover her head as he passes.

But it was not to see the Santissimo Bambino in his quality of physician, that Juliet visited with her father the church honoured as his habitual

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abode, and from which, if we may believe the priests, he is never willingly absent; for one of them gravely assured a visitor, that having been on one occasion violently carried off by sacrilegious hands during the day, the Bambino found his own way back at night to his familiar home.

From Christmas-eve till Epiphany he forms an important part year by year in the scene of the nativity. We will make, with Juliet and her father, the toilsome ascent of 120 steps which leads to the great door in the Ara Cœli facing the west. Pushing aside the heavy leathern curtain, we find ourselves in a church rich with associations of the past, and, if not architecturally perfect, full of a picturesque beauty of its own. The whole of one of the side chapels is given up to a representation, in which perspective and light and shade are so well maintained, that our senses are for a moment deceived, we seem to be looking into a grotto or cave, in which is seated the Virgin mother, with the Holy Child in her arms, an ox and ass immediately behind suggest that it is a stable, Joseph is at her side, the wise men are worshipping and presenting their gifts, shepherds are in the distance, and overhead God the Father is represented with cherubs and angelic harpers around Him. This gross conception added to the bedizened and be-jewelled dresses of the Virgin and Child, dispel any illusion which may have crept over us as to the reality of the scene. From the opposite side to the chapel strange sounds meet our ear, a

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staging is erected which affords a preaching place for little girls; and here they recite little speeches or dialogues (written for them doubtless by the priest or some religious friend of their family), in explanation of the scene of the nativity opposite to them. Strangely their shrill piping voices contrast with the deep and solemn mysteries of which they speak, but indeed their theme is more often the praise of the Virgin mother, than the grace of the Incarnate Saviour.

The scene in the Presepio (or manger, as the word literally signifies) had awakened in Juliet little more than juvenile curiosity and wonder, but one of the recitations, well written, and rendered with touching pathos by the little childish voice which uttered it, struck a deep chord which seemed for ever vibrating in the lonely chamber of her heart. The Holy Virgin was described, her universal sympathy, her maternal arms open to all who wanted a friend, a mother. Juliet seemed rooted to the spot. She bent her young head, and two large hot tears escaped from the brimming eyelids, and splashed upon the pavement as she breathed from her inmost soul the desire, "Holy Virgin, be my mother."

"Morini wondered at her abstracted manner on their return; he had himself been heartily amused at the gestures and tones of the little preachers, and he sought to parry with jests the earnest questions of his child. He would ill have liked to have had his peace disturbed, and peace such as his consisted

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in taking life as he found it, and seeking to know nothing below the surface or beyond the present.

Juliet now more than ever longed for a teacher, but among all the worshippers of the Madonna who surrounded her, none seemed to seek or find in her the tender protector, the maternal counsellor, above all, the sympathizing friend, of whom she had dreamed. Hours were spent by the lonely child in prayer before a little altar to the Virgin which occupied a niche in her own apartment; but there was no answer of peace. She scarcely knew what she expected, what she hoped for: she had heard that the Holy Mother sometimes vouchsafed wondrous tokens of her presence to her devout worshippers. Rome was even now ringing with her praises, in that she had graciously winked upon the adoring crowd gathered round her altar in the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo; but it was not a sign like this which could satisfy Juliet: the cry of her heart was, "Holy mother, hear me: come to me." But, as it happened to the worshippers of old, "there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

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CHAPTER II.

CONVENT LIFE REFUSED—A DYING WISH AT LAST FULFILLED —MRS. PERCIVAL'S HOME—A SUDDEN JOURNEY.

"HOPE deferred maketh the heart sick," and the yearnings of Juliet Morini towards the Holy Mother were already beginning to be paralyzed by long delay, when the time arrived for her first communion. She was sent, as is customary with young Roman girls, to a convent, to pass a week in prayer and preparation. The efforts of the sisters were not wanting to render this week of monastic life agreeable, and ere long they had drawn from her the secret grief which preyed upon her. She conceived herself "fore-doomed." "The Holy Mother," she said, "would have none of her: she had sought her long and earnestly, but sought in vain."

It was then their turn to interpret her tale. "The world, the cold, chilling world," they told her, "had stood between her and peace. The conventual life was a haven of refuge,—a family, a sisterhood, where an earthly mother lavished her tenderness, and the Heavenly Mother vouchsafed the brightness of her

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unseen presence. Why should the dove remain outside the ark? Once within its shelter, she would never wish again to leave it."

To all this Juliet had but one answer: "My father!" but it was sufficient. And she left the convent firm in her filial duty, though with a conviction that she was closing behind her the one door which led to happiness.

But that Morini was entangled at this time in the meshes of gambling speculations, and alternately absorbed in moody abstraction, or excited into hilarious gaiety, as fortune showed herself adverse or favourable, he could hardly have failed to notice the settled dejection, rendered only more touching by Juliet's attempt to conceal it in his presence, which betrayed itself in her quiet tones and subdued manner. Corroding grief soon wrought its ravages in the fair young form, and blanched cheeks, untasted meals, and failing strength, could no longer be concealed. Morini, who had drunk the cup of pleasure till it palled upon his taste, and had sought latterly to intoxicate himself with the fatal excitement of gambling, awoke suddenly to the conviction that his child was fading away before his eyes.

As the lightning-flash, though immediately succeeded by the very blackness of darkness, may suffice to reveal to the traveller the realities of his position, so did Lorenzo Morini wake up to the consciousness of all that his motherless child had needed, but not found, in her only surviving parent. Remorseful

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memory reached back even to his wife's cheerless death-bed: it recorded the one passing smile reserved for her babe, the one dying wish, that it should be confined to her mother's care.

It might not yet be too late to carry this wish into execution; and under the strong reaction of his newly-awakened solicitude, Morini wrote to Mrs. Percival, entreating her to come without delay. His correspondence with her during the past sixteen years had been so languidly maintained, that beyond the bare outlines of her history,—the facts that she had become a widow, and that her other children had settled in homes of their own,—he wrote in ignorance of her circumstances, and in doubt even whether she still resided in her former abode, so that he could not but be very uncertain as to the issue of his request. We shall follow the letter to its destination, and get earlier information than was possible for Morini.

It was a clear October morning, cold and darkness had not yet turned the postman's labour into penance, and the degree of freshness in the air which made him look narrowly at the dew-laden grass, to see if it were not already crisped with frost, only added vigour to his tread, as he walked up to the ivied porch of Mrs. Percival's house, and left, among others, the foreign letter on thin paper, with its Roman stamp.

An old and valued servant, with the precision of long habit, arranged the letters on a small silver waiter, and passing two or three doors which led to

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the principal apartments of the house, knocked at that of a breakfast room, which at the present moment was flooded with the beams of the morning sun.

Had the room been vacant many pleasant thoughts might have found place as to the comforts of an English home,—the mingled ease and elegance of the well-selected furniture, the harmonious assortment of colours, the books and works of art that betrayed the tastes of the occupant; but in her presence such thoughts gave way to the interest excited by herself. The arm-chair, in which she was seated, seemed rather a tribute to her position as mistress of the house, than needed to minister to the infirmities of age; yet the hair parted over her brow was of silvery whiteness, and lines marked that brow which had surely once been printed by sorrow and care. She seemed like some noble vessel which has outridden the storm, and is safely moored in a haven of peace. Traces were not wanting of former beauty, but it was neither the regularity of her features, nor her still delicate complexion, which constituted the charm of her face; upon and through these there rested an almost luminous expression of heartfelt peace and abiding happiness. Sometimes the clear eyes looked up, and kindled with a new radiance, as if they had met and answered a loving smile; more often they beamed quiet content on everything around her.

As to human companionship she was alone, though

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on a small stand beside her chair rested several photographs in open cases, as though she were endeavouring to render more vivid those memories of the absent and the departed, which can people our solitude. To be thus recalled to Mrs. Percival's remembrance was a privilege to be envied, for hers were winged thoughts, and had not rested long on any dear object of her love ere they soared upwards, and were transmuted into prayer.

The letters were received from Bernard with only a kindly glance of recognition, for her eye had caught the foreign post-mark and the Roman stamp. Among the sorrows of earlier days, Clara's foreign marriage to one of another creed, and her death so shortly afterwards, had been keenly felt. She had never seen her son-in-law, and though his neglect of her had been more the result of carelessness than of prejudice, it had equally deprived her of any opportunities of showing her interest in Clara's child.

Lorenzo's passionate appeal took her therefore much by surprise, and for the moment she was staggered at the greatness of the sacrifice demanded of her. Youth delights in change and motion, age in quiet and rest. Her tastes and preferences were all English: she had never been a traveller. She was asked to leave her Church, her country, her home, and that for a child she had never seen, and a son-in-law who had treated her with marked neglect. The vision too rose up before her of three other sweet English homes, which would be darkened if

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the visits from her, to which their occupants looked forward with such dear delight, were no longer possible. Could she be called upon to sacrifice the many to the one?

Then, as was her wont, she looked up and folded her hands, while her lips breathed the words, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" And it happened to her according to the promise: "The meek will He guide in judgment." She remembered Him who left the ninety and and nine safely-folded sheep, that He might go after the one straying in the wilderness. Self-indulgence and self-will retired from the unequal contest, and the language of her heart was, "Here am I: send me." She re-read her letter, and all the tender motherliness of her nature was engaged for the orphan child.

There are those who keep to old age something of the ardour and eagerness of youth, and the step once resolved upon, Mrs. Percival was determined to carry it out with the utmost possible dispatch; while Morini imagined her still considering his request, the letter was on its way, stating the day when she hoped to arrive in Rome.

Her first impression of her son-in-law was favourable, but the limited command which each possessed over the language of the other, seriously restricted their intercourse; Juliet, on the contrary, had learned English well and thoroughly, stimulated perhaps by a desire to know that which had been the mother-tongue of one of her parents.

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Her father led Mrs. Percival to her room: her weakness and lassitude were now such that she spent much of her time on her couch. She was sleeping as they entered, and at Mrs. Percival's request he left her alone with her grandchild, to watch for her waking.

The interval was very welcome, for the flood-gates of thought and memory were opened, and the tide rolled in with a force which threatened to break down her habitual self-control. The likeness to her lost Clara was startling, though every feature was spiritualized in Juliet, by the extreme delicacy of her appearance. She had borrowed nothing from the land of her birth but her dark, glossy tresses. Her fair skin and deep violet eyes, shaded by their long lashes, were inherited from her mother; these lashes rested now on cheeks almost colourless as her pillow, and the hair, tossed back as if its weight oppressed her, fell in rich masses over her shoulder, the graceful outline of which was only half concealed by the light drapery which covered it. Blue veins marbled the transparent temples, and her lips, though exquisitely modelled, looked pale and bloodless.

A colder nature than Mrs. Percival's would have warmed to the fair, frail creature; with her the instinct to cherish and protect her, and to fold her in the arms of maternal love, became every moment stronger. She possessed herself of one of the slender hands, and was holding it in a light but caressing clasp, when the violet eyes unclosed, and the sleeper awoke.

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Only half aroused, she lay as in a happy dream; she glanced for a moment at her imprisoned fingers, and then closed them softly upon the warm hand which held them. She turned now a more steady and conscious gaze upon her grandmother: their eyes met, and a smile of wonderful beauty broke over the child's pale face. Still she neither moved nor spoke, but lay in a sweet dream of contentment. At length her grandmother bent over and kissed her brow, and then both arms were clasped around her neck, and an English "Thank you," though spoken with a foreign accent, was breathed into her ear.

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CHAPTER III.

PONTIFICAL LOTTERY—THE SUCCESSFUL GAMBLER—SAD TIDINGS—A DEATH-BED—PRIESTLY CONSOLATIONS—WHERE IS HE?

SUCH was Juliet's first introduction to her grandmother, and each succeeding week and month developed the "love at first sight" which had thus been awakened. Mrs. Percival wisely left for a time all religious differences between herself and her grandchild unnoticed, content to live before her her habitual life of peace and joy. Juliet too, in the treasury of mother-love opened to her, felt for the present satisfied: she doubted not that the Holy Virgin had answered her prayers, and was ever ready to associate thoughts of her with her new-found happiness.

Her health, which had suffered more from mental than physical causes of disturbance, began visibly and rapidly to improve, and her father threw off the anxiety which for the time had possessed him, to the exclusion of other interests. Juliet, recovering, happy, and under tender and careful guardianship,

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was, he persuaded himself, independent of him, and he was once more free to pursue that which was becoming, alas, more and more a master-passion with him,—the dangerous excitement of gambling. He did but in this follow the multitude to do evil. We would endeavour to give the reader some idea of the extent to which this pernicious upas tree has struck its roots in Roman soil. Can we wonder that it is so, when we know that it has been kindly nurtured and fostered by the Holy Father himself, and that the great centre of gambling in Rome is the "Pontifical Lottery"?

Modern travellers who have spent time long enough in Rome to become familiarized with its customs, call it "the institution of Rome: greater than the Church, far greater than the trade."* Another says, "The game of games in Rome is the lottery," and he enumerates some of its fatal effects:† "The habit of gambling engendered by it ruins the temper, depraves the morals, and keeps up a constant state of excitement, at variance with any settled and serious occupation. The temptations to laziness which it offers are too great for any people luxurious or idle by temperament, and the demon of luck is set upon the altar which should be dedicated to industry. If one happy chance can bring a fortune, who will spend laborious days to gain a competence? The fallacious hope that their ticket will one day bring a prize,

* The late Dean Alford. † W. Story: *Roba di Roma.*

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leads them from step to step, until having emptied their purses, they are tempted to raise the necessary funds by any unjustifiable means. Loss after loss does not discourage them: it is always 'the next time they are to win.' But of all ill luck that can happen to the lottery gambler, the worst is to win a small prize. It is all over with him from that time forward. Into the great pit of the lottery, everything that he can lay his hands on is sure to go."

That so fruitful a source of demoralization should be suffered to exist under the very eyes of His Holiness is a mystery which the Roman *Minister of Finance* must solve for us. The lottery is a branch of his department, and is under the direction of a Monsignore. When it was first established, its object was the furnishing a marriage portion for certain young girls, at the public expense. They were designated by numbers, and the fortunate ones were those whose numbers were drawn. But if money could be raised in this way for portionless girls, it could also be raised for impoverished Popes. In course of time, the Popes confiscated the charitable fund to their own exchequer, and the whole sum now is appropriated by them as a part of Papal revenue. When we add that the proceeds of the lottery are said to average 30,000 scudi, or £6,250 *weekly*, we shall not be surprised that it is upheld under a system of spiritual traffic, which has ever regarded as objects of merchandise "the souls of men."

It is somewhat embarrassing for His Holiness when

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the claims of the lottery come into collision with the sanctity of ecclesiastical observances. The central office for the sale of lottery tickets is in the Piazza Madama, behind the general post-office. Every street, however, of any note in Rome, has its lottery shop under Government authority, and with the Papal arms over their doors. The principal streets have several such shops. As Easter approaches, the Cardinal Vicar, careful for the spiritual interests of the people, causes to be affixed to the walls Papal decrees enjoining spiritual exercises at certain hours. At such times, shopkeepers, under pains and penalties, must close their shops, *except* the vendors of lottery tickets. Their trade is too important to His Holiness to be allowed to suffer suspension.

Numbers! everywhere numbers! The people think in numbers, numbers are suggested to them by each passing event, numbers haunt their dreams.

These last are peculiarly prized: a book of several hundred pages ("Libro dei Sogni") is published of such dreams. Some numbers are considered sympathetic; such are carefully combined, and large sums are staked to secure them. The lottery is drawn weekly. For each week numbers from one to ninety are issued, of which only five can be drawn. The number used to be eight,—*otto;* hence, perhaps, the name lotto, or lottery. A sum staked upon two numbers is called an *ambo,* upon three a *terno,* upon four a *quaterno,* upon five a *cinquino.* To win a cinquino is to acquire an ample fortune

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by the turn of a wheel. So is it with a noble family of the present day: a lucky ancestor won a cinquino, and purchased his marquisate with the proceeds.

It may not be uninteresting to the reader to hear the testimony of an eye-witness as to the scene which takes place in the Piazza Madama, at a quarter before noon on every Saturday. We quote almost verbatim, from the lively narration of the late Dean Alford.

"First, the piazza or square is crowded with people, mostly of the lowest class. There are mingled with them a few of higher station; some three or four carriages, with English spectators; French soldiers, without whom is no place and no thing in Rome; and here and there a thick face, with its arched nose, from the Ghetto, or Hebrew quarter.

"Look up, and you see a balcony projecting over the arched gateway of a large imposing building, forming one side of the square. This balcony on ordinary days bears on its entablature the inscription '*Ministero delle Finanze*' (Ministry of the Finances), but to-day it is dressed out in flaunting red, as for a festa, and the inscription is covered over. But it may be as well to bear it in mind.

"In the middle of this balcony, on the rail, is fixed a glass barrel, with a handle to turn it round. Behind it stand three or four officials, who have been just now ushered in with a blast from two trumpeters, also stationed in the balcony. Immediately behind

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the glass barrel itself, stands a boy of some twelve or thirteen years, dressed in the white uniform of one of the orphan establishments, with a huge white shovel hat. Some time is occupied by the folding and putting into the barrel pieces of paper inscribed with the numbers from one onwards. Each of these is proclaimed as folded and put in, by one of the officials, who acts as spokesman or crier. At last, after eighty-seven, eighty-eight, and eighty-nine have been given out, he raises his voice to a shout, and sings forth, '*Numero novanta*' (number ninety), this completing the number put in.

"And now, or before this, appears on the balcony another character, no less a person than a Monsignore, or high dignitary of the Church; one on his way to the highest preferment, already all but a bishop, and soon possibly to become a cardinal. He appears not in his ordinary, but in his more solemn official costume, and this connects the ceremonial directly with the spiritual authority of the realm.

"And now commences the drawing. The barrel having been for some time turned rapidly round, so as to shuffle the numbers, the orphan takes off his hat, makes the sign of the cross, and having waved his open hand in the air, to show that it is empty, inserts it into the barrel, and drawing out a number, gives it to the Monsignore, who opens it and hands it to the crier, who gives it out in musical cadence, '*Prima estratta numero venti cinque:*' *i.e.*, the first drawn is number twenty-five, if it should have

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so happened. Then the trumpets blow their blast, and the same is repeated four times more, the proclamation varying each time, '*Secunda estratta, terza, quarta, quinta,*' etc., five numbers being thus the whole drawn out of ninety put in. This done, with various expressions of surprise, delight, or disappointment from the crowd below, the officials disappear, the square empties itself, and all is as usual till the next Saturday at the same time."

We have said that the revenue obtained from the sale of lottery tickets is now appropriated by the Pope to his own use. Those who draw prizes are, however, mulcted ten per cent. from every prize, for hospitals and for the poor. Such is the rage for the lottery in Rome, that this tax on the prizes brings in a very considerable revenue for charitable purposes.

That such a demoralizing system as that we have described should be not only tolerated, but reduced to system, and upheld by priestly rule, is a fact which needs no comment. It has been invariably found that the greater is public distress and poverty, the greater likewise is the yield of the lottery to the exchequer. Misery makes the people desperate, and they venture more recklessly with the little they possess. Is not this spiritual misrule aptly described in the words of the prophet, "Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock." *

* Ezek. xxxiv. 3.

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Such being the facilities afforded in his native city for the indulgence of this vicious propensity to gamble, it was not surprising that Lorenzo Morini, who from his youth had allowed himself to be governed by his impulses instead of subjecting them to the control of judgment or reason, should have given himself wholly to the excitement of the lottery. We have mentioned the "*Libro dei Sogni:*" it is a book in which every possible event that can be dreamed of is catalogued, and has a number appended to it. The happy dreamer who can purchase the numbers which correspond to his dream, presents himself at the weekly drawing with fond hopes of success. Lorenzo was a great dreamer. The "*Libro dei Sogni*" became his inseparable companion, and occasional success kept alive his hopes. He saw very little either of his child or of Mrs. Percival. As to the former, he satisfied himself that he was devoting all his energies to improving her fortune; from the latter he felt the instinctive shrinking which ever tends to keep us from those whose spirit and conduct is a tacit condemnation of our own. Whence she obtained the peace and contentment with which her whole countenance was lighted up, he neither knew nor cared to inquire; but in her presence he became more conscious of the unslaked thirst and feverish excitement of his own spirit. Her presence he therefore rather shunned than courted, though when with her he treated her with a deferential and graceful

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courtesy, which bespoke her interest and good opinion.

On every subject but that of her father, Juliet was learning to talk to her grandmother without reserve. Every other anxiety was confided to her. But he had ever been her hero. She could scarcely admit to herself, much less to another, that there could be in him anything to regret, anything to wish otherwise. She knew far more than did Mrs. Percival, who was a comparative stranger in Rome, of the nature and working of the lottery system; and though she ventured upon no word of remonstrance, her wistful looks on Saturday morning, as the weekly drawing approached, excited in her father feelings of compunction, which made him glad on these mornings to find any reason for absenting himself.

Juliet was growing accustomed to this, and would be on the watch for him in the afternoon, endeavouring to cheer away by her caresses any moodiness or depression when ill fortune had attended him, which might have betrayed him to her grandmother.

On the Saturday before his seizure in the Piazza Montanara, she had thus watched; but her first glance at him through the closed shades of the window, showed that he had been a winner. Before she was aware, his rapid tread echoed on the marble floor, and he had caught her in his arms, uttering the exultant exclamation, "My little Juliet will be a Contessa yet!"

Could she do otherwise than be glad for him?

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He had staked heavily, but won beyond his utmost hopes. As he looked upon the now wealthy child, with all her natural endowment of beauty, he pictured a brillant future for her and for himself. Alas, he had earned for her complete orphanhood, and for himself an early grave!

His excitement was too great to allow of his remaining long with Juliet, neither did he care to be the bearer of his own good news to Mrs. Percival. He returned to his house at night, but only after the ladies had retired. Bernard, who opened the door to him, noticed an unwonted flush upon his face. He made no remark however, supposing him to have passed the evening with convivial companions, and to have barely kept within the bounds of temperance.

In the morning he complained of headache, but resisted Juliet's importunities that he would remain at home at least during the sultry hours of the day. He was eager to receive the congratulations of his friends, but he promised to return to her for the evening. The restlessness of an over-excited brain made him hurry from place to place. Surprised at the lethargy and dulness which were creeping upon him, under circumstances so exhilarating, he tried to rouse himself with stimulants; but these were worse than useless, and he had concluded to return home, calling on a doctor on his way; when, as we have seen, he was seized with apoplexy in the Piazza Montanara.

The prompt measures used by Dr. Selwyn had not

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availed to restore consciousness: he knew that he must prepare the family of the unfortunate gentleman to expect the worst, and he sent Adriel forward, that they might be spared the shock of seeing him brought without warning to the door.

Adriel had determined to inquire of the servant who should open to him, of whom the family consisted, and to use his own discretion as to whether he should summon any one of them to receive his sorrowful tidings.

He rung lightly; but Juliet, who had been haunted with vague fears about her father through the day, and who was now every moment expecting him, ran to the door, that she might herself have the pleasure of admitting him. She was seized with confusion when she found herself face to face with a young and strange gentleman; but she recovered her composure in a moment, and, with a slight bend of her graceful little head, exclaimed, "I beg your pardon, sir: I was expecting my father." She retired to the drawing-room, leaving him to communicate his business to the servant, who was even now crossing the hall to answer his summons.

The respectful attitude of the servant who waited his message recalled Adriel to himself. His eyes had involuntarily followed her retreating figure. How lovely the smile of welcome had been, intended for her father, and changing so rapidly to embarrassment and disappointment when she found she had admitted a stranger! Her father, then, was so dear, so longed for; must he break that young heart with

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his cruel tidings? In agitated words he asked if the Signorina had brothers?

"No, Signor."

"But she has a mother?"

"A grandmother, Signor: an English lady."

"Her father is coming home; but he is ill, very ill: the Signorina must not see him."

He proceeded to explain in low tones what had happened, when, turning half round, he saw Juliet, with blanched cheeks, standing behind him. Very touching was the steadfast look on the young face, as of one who had been accustomed to stand alone in her sorrows. Her first thought was for her grandmother, who had not left her room since her siesta. "I will tell her myself, Giuseppe: she must not be startled. Let me know when"—but at the next word she must have broken down; and she would not give way before a stranger: she turned hastily, and disappeared through a door which led to the staircase.

The news quickly spread through the household that their master was being brought to his home in an apoplectic fit, and hasty summons were sent to the priest and to the physician of the family.

Meanwhile, in an upper room, the young girl was burying her face in her grandmother's lap, and trying to stifle her sobs; while tender arms pressed her closely, and a tender voice repeated, in low caressing tones, "My poor child! my poor Juliet!"

The child pressed her hands to her throbbing temples, and with a desperate effort at self-control,

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she steadied her voice to say, "He cannot speak: he has known nothing since he fell; they say he will not speak again. The priest will come; but he cannot confess. Oh, *Nonna mia,* will God judge him for this?"

"No, little one; not for *this:* never for *this.*" A tap at the door was followed by the announcement that Signor Morini was brought home: the room in which they were was out of hearing of sounds in the street or hall.

A shiver passed through the child's frame. Her grandmother drew her arm in her's, and whispered, "God is our Refuge and Strength, a *very present help* in trouble," as they rose to go to him.

They were bearing him up the stairs; Dr. Selwyn and Adriel supporting his head. A glance at his face was sufficient to show Mrs. Percival that life was nearly extinct. Juliet could not look, but when he was at length laid upon his bed, she sunk on her knees beside his pillow, and locked his now chill hand in both her own.

Dr. Selwyn remained, but Adriel had no further excuse for doing so; with a lingering look of mingled pity and commiseration at the slight kneeling figure, he withdrew. Mrs. Percival followed him to the door. "You will call again, and allow me to thank you, sir, at a calmer moment," she said. He bowed, raised his eyes for a moment to her face, looked again, as if the sight inspired him with confidence, but words would not come, and he left her.

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Almost at the same moment the priest and the family physician arrived; the visit of the latter was little more than a form, for the sick man was almost in the article of death; little time remained for the rites of the Church. It is required that during their performance the room should be cleared of relations and friends, candles lighted, and the priest left alone with his penitent. Juliet hoped that as confession in this case was impossible, she might have been permitted to remain; but priestly rules can only be relaxed when the interests of mother Church require it, and she was obliged to be content with a promise that she should be recalled, if life yet lingered, when the usual ceremonies had been observed, and extreme unction had been given.

Morini breathed his last while the priest was yet engaged with him, and after death, custom forbade any interference with his charge of the remains. The last loving offices which can be rendered to the dead are performed by priests alone; they take possession of the body, watch over it, and prepare it for burial. It is not ordinarily allowed to remain in the house more than twelve hours after death, but as Morini had died at night-fall, and funerals in Rome take place at night, interment was necessarily somewhat delayed. It is usual for the friends of the deceased to vacate the house immediately after a death, remaining away a week, and leaving the funeral to the priests; for the Italians have an extreme horror of death: can we wonder at it, when

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we know that in their belief death opens to them the gate, not of heaven, but of purgatory. But the strong nerves and stronger faith of Mrs. Percival raised her above these morbid fears, and Juliet expressed no wish to go.

The revolting carelessness with which a Roman funeral is generally conducted by the hired officials who carry out its details, is no doubt partly owing to this absence of near relatives. They did not know that on this occasion young eyes, swollen with weeping, were watching from an upper window the sad procession of *becchini* and *frati*, as it came down the street and stopped before the door. The appearance of the *becchini* made her shudder, in their long black *cappe*, covering head and face as well as body, with two large holes cut in front of the eyes, to enable them to see.

Some of them entered the house, while the others kept guard below. Soon followed the heavy tread so terrible in the ears of the bereaved, and the coffin was carried out; so rough, so unadorned, but it was only seen for a few moments: it was slid upon the bier, and the velvet pall drawn over it, rich with its golden trimmings and embroidered insignia of death. The signal was given, four of the *becchini* hoisted it on their shoulders, the *frati* surrounded it with their lighted tapers, and ceased the laughing and talking and snuff-taking in which they had indulged whilst waiting for it, to break forth into a lugubrious chant of "*Miserere Domine.*"

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Sick at heart, Juliet followed with her eyes the long procession of *frati*, with their flaring tapers, till it turned the corner of the street. The last sound of their voices died upon her ear, and a new sense of desolation came upon her as she realized that he was now gone, *quite* gone,—that his place would know him no more. She would never hear his gay laugh again, or watch the easy grace of his movements, or be folded in his embrace. He was gone. *Where?* The young crescent moon shed a silver light through the tremulous air, the stars brought messages from the Source of light which kindled them,—they told of God's holiness, His searching gaze, of the calm majesty of His presence: was her father *there?* above the stars? with God?

There was a little rustle at the door, it opened gently, and her grandmother entered. She too had heard the heavy tread of the *becchini*, and, anxious for her child, she had stolen to her room to see if she slept. Juliet flung herself into her arms, and with a voice sharpened by the anguish of her doubt, cried, "*Nonna mia! where* is he?"

How could she answer? Less than truth she would never speak. The tender woman-heart took refuge in silence; she pressed the child yet closer to her breast, and breathed, "God comfort thee."

Juliet understood the silence, and the grief was henceforth hidden away, deep in the recesses of her heart.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE GHETTO—THE FIRST JEWS IN ROME—PAGAN PERSECUTIONS AND PAPAL—DISGRACEFUL SCENES—CRUELTIES OF PAUL IV.—UNWILLING WORSHIP AT ST. ANGELO—EVERYBODY TAXED TO PAY FOR NOBODY.

IT is time that we should return to our friend Ben Ezra Luppino, whom we left in the Piazza del Pianto, on his way to his home in the Ghetto. We shall remember that we left him smarting under a mortification, which had wounded alike his benevolence and his national honour.

Such feelings were not likely to be soothed as he pursued his walk through the Ghetto. The very name, derived from the Talmud, Ghet, implies a reproach: it signifies the herding together of those who are separated off, or disjoined. Such has ever been the treatment of God's ancient people in the city of the Popes. Their touch, their presence, their proximity, has been considered dangerous and polluting.

As we are desirous to put the reader in possession of the cumulative burden of oppression and wrong

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which has been heaped upon this unhappy people, it may be needful to glance backward at their history in earlier times, and for a few moments to interrupt the thread of our narrative: the interruption shall be as short as is consistent with the object we have in view. For the facts thus collected we are chiefly indebted to the researches of Mr. W. Story, in his graphic sketches of Roman life, under the title, "Roba di Roma."

The ancestors of the colony which now throng the Ghetto were the captives brought away by Pompey the Great, after he had victoriously entered Jerusalem and profaned the temple, about fifty years before the birth of Christ. The great Julius Cæsar was kind to them; Augustus yet more so, assigning to them a quarter in the Trastevere for their habitation, and giving them full freedom to earn their living as they could in the city. He even offered costly presents to adorn the temple at Jerusalem, and remitted the labours of the Jews on their Sabbath. The wrath had not yet come upon them to the uttermost, for they had not yet filled up the measure of their guilt; the suicidal cry had not yet been uttered: "His blood be on us, and on our children."

Augustus died, and the Jews, in gratitude for his kindness, wept and bewailed him for a week. They had reason: their palmy days ceased with him. Tiberius, his successor, laid a heavy hand upon them; but his worst acts were deeds of clemency compared with the cruelties and follies of Caligula. It is

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worthy of note that the degrading and servile ceremony of kissing the Pope's toe, still observed by good Romanists, is a relic of the arrogant assumption of Caligula, when he wished to be worshipped as a god. The practice was introduced by this heathen Emperor. The coincidence is, to say the least, strange, that it should be kept up by him who claims Divine attributes and Divine honour, and in whose praise the medal is struck bearing the inscription, "Quem creant, adorant."

Great as were the cruelties of Caligula, the captive Jew could yet feel that he had a country, a nationality. But darker days were to come: Jerusalem was besieged in the days of Titus and Vespasian, and a siege of unparalleled horror resulted in the capture of the city. The days came which had drawn tears in prospect from the compassionate eyes of her King; her "holy and beautiful house in which her fathers worshipped was burned with fire, and all her pleasant things were laid waste." Sacrilegious hands spared not to lift the veil of the temple: its holiest symbols and vessels were seized to grace the triumphal procession of the conqueror. From the portico of Octavia, the site of which is included within the precincts of the Ghetto, Titus and Vespasian led forth their glittering train, and behind them captive Jews bore the seven-branched candlestick of gold, the silver trumpets of the jubilee, the tables of the law, the massive golden table of shew-bread, the veil which covered the mercy-seat,—bore

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them to be bestowed where the conquerors pleased; some in the Temple of Peace, some in the Emperor's palace, as though they had been common spoil, mere trophies of martial prowess.

To perpetuate the memory of the fall of Jerusalem, Titus raised his magnificent arch, the unwilling captives laying the stones which should be a lasting witness of their disgrace: to this day no Jew will pass under that arch.

Domitian treated the Jews with peculiar severity, depriving them of their residence in the Trastevere district, and driving them entirely out of the precincts of Rome. "From this time forward," says Story, "they led a pariah life outside the walls, the scoff and jeer of all, earning a miserable pittance by fortune-telling, interpretation of dreams, magical arts, and thieving."

Under the times of the later Emperors and earlier Popes, their condition was improved. They acquired considerable celebrity in medical art, and were received as physicians even by the Popes themselves. But for all favours they depended on the caprice of the reigning Pope, and bitter acts of degradation mingled largely in any toleration extended to them. Upon the installation of a Pope, a deputation of Romish Jews were obliged to present themselves to His Holiness on the public way of his triumphal procession, singing songs in his praise, and carrying on their shoulders a copy of the Pentateuch, written on parchment, bound in gold, and covered with a

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veil, which on bended knees they offered to him, beseeching his protection as follows: "Most Holy Father, we Israelites beseech you, in the name of our synagogue, that the Mosaic Law given by Almighty God to Moses our priest on Mount Sinai, may be conceded and allowed to us, as by other Eminent Popes, the predecessors of your Holiness, it has been conceded and allowed." The gracious answer accorded on such occasions to the petitioners, was as follows: "We affirm the Law, but we curse the Hebrew people, and their exposition of it." This ceremony was instituted, or rather revived from the homage formerly paid to the Emperors, in 1119, and continued thenceforward for nearly four centuries. When it was at length remitted, the Jews were, in lieu of the homage, bound to cover with costly stuffs and carpets, a portion of the street over which the papal procession passed; and subsequently, by a refinement of cruelty, they were bound to decorate with their richest tapestries, silks, and embroideries, and at a heavy cost to themselves, the detested arch of Titus, built to commemorate their degradation.

As time passed on, and the Papacy grew stronger, successive acts of oppression added to the miseries of this unhappy people. Eugenius IV., in 1431, not only loaded them with taxation, but compelled them to furnish 1130 scudi annually towards the festivities of the carnival. From henceforth one of the principal amusements of the carnival was to maltreat the Jews. Paul II., in 1468, first ordained the races of

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Jews in the Corso. To give zest to the amusement these races occasioned, the Jews were compelled to run with a rope round their necks, and almost entirely naked. Every day of the carnival was this disgraceful scene repeated, and the custom remained in force for two hundred years. Not till 1668, under Clement IX., were they absolved from it, and from accompanying the cavalcade of senators, by paying a tax of three hundred scudi, and agreeing to furnish the prizes for the races.

Beside this, on the first Sunday of carnival, a deputation from the Ghetto, composed of the chiefs of the Jews, were forced to go bareheaded to the palace of the capitol, where were the *conservators* of the Roman Senate. Here they threw themselves on their knees, presenting to the *conservators* bouquets of flowers and twenty scudi, which they prayed them to apply to the decoration of the balcony of the Roman Senate, in the Piazza del Popolo. They then proceeded to the senator, and kneeling, besought his permission to reside in the Ghetto during the ensuing year. The senator placed his foot upon their brows, and commanded them to rise, saying, after an appointed formula, that "although they were not acceptable in Rome, yet out of pity they would be allowed to remain."

Among the persecutors of the Jews in the middle ages, Paul IV., the Neapolitan Caraffa, who was made Pope in 1555, holds a distinguished place. It was he who prohibited Jewish physicians from

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practising among Christians,—who turned Hebraism into a badge of shame, by ordaining that the Jews should never enter the city without wearing a yellow hat, nor the Jewesses without a yellow veil; for "it is truly too shameless," he says, "that Jews, whose guilt has precipitated them into eternal slavery, should insolently assume to dwell among Christians without wearing a badge." It was this same Paul IV. who disabled them from carrying on any trade or handicraft, and from the purchase or sale of merchandise. He stripped them of every title of rank or honour; and, lastly, on he 26th of July, 1556, he drove them into the narrow pen now known as the Ghetto, and walled them up there like beasts: a space so small that three Roman palaces would cover it, and in a district of so low a level, that every rise of the Tiber overflows it. On one occasion, when the quarter was overflowed, they begged permission to come out of it temporarily, until the waters should abate, but it was answered that "water would not hurt them." In 1566, Paul V. ordained that the gates of the Ghetto should be closed at Ave Maria, after which hour no one should be allowed to pass out or in. When the French occupied Rome the prison of the Ghetto was opened, and permission was given to its occupants to dwell in the city and engage in trade. But on the return of Pius VII. in 1814, they were again imprisoned and afflicted with their old disabilities. Leo XII., indeed, gave them the right to purchase houses within the limits of the Ghetto,

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and to hold them in fee. He also enlarged its boundaries, so as to take in a portion of the Pescheria, and opened in the walls eight gates; but these were strictly guarded and closed at night.

In the Pescheria, or fish market, stands a church, St. Angelo, which the Jew of the Ghetto may well regard with horror. For centuries they were forced to listen therein once a week to a sermon setting forth their perversity, delivered by a Dominican priest, upon the very text which had been preached upon in the Jewish synagogue the day before. It was first suggested by a converted Jew, named Andrias; and Gregory XIII., nothing loth, carried it into execution. He seems to have taken the command, "Compel them to come in," in its most literal form. He ordained that at least one hundred men and fifty women, which number he afterwards raised to three hundred, should attend this Christian service. It belonged to the Secretary of the Vicariat, with his attendant carabineers, to compel the unhappy Jews to this violation of their consciences. Every Sunday the *sbirri* came into the Ghetto, and drove them with the crack of their whips within the precincts of the church. Guards without, made sure that the number was correct, and if the attention of the worshippers within grew lax or drowsy, the *sbirri* were ready with their lashes to enforce at least the semblance of devotion. For these good offices the Jews themselves were expected to indemnify the Secretary; nay, more, since this compulsory attendance has been

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excused (it was one of the early acts of Pio Nono to abolish the custom) the tax remains, and the Jews still pay upwards of seventy-three scudi annually to the Secretary, in virtue of his sometime office.

The burden of taxation laid upon them is, for many reasons, peculiarly oppressive. First it is laid upon a people so poor, that of the four thousand now included in the Ghetto, more than one-half are entirely without property: serious illness among any one of these throws him at once upon the public purse of his co-religionists; for to the Jew every hospital and institution of charity is closed. They have established in their own community a synagogue, a University, good schools of instruction and elementary education; and they tax themselves with three hundred scudi to support the poor, in addition to all private charities. Secondly, these taxes are oppressive, because of their crying injustice: let a few instances speak. In former times, within the area of the States of the Church, there were one hundred and fifteen Jewish Universities, each paid a tribute of ten scudi. These Universities were nearly all suppressed by Paul IV.; but as it was less convenient to him to forego the tribute, he exacted the whole from the Roman Jews. Again, an apostate Jew, named Massarano da Mantova, having written a book against the Hebrew religion, Urban VIII. ordered the Roman community of Jews to pay him an annual pension of six hundred scudi as a reward for attacking their faith. After his death this pension was decreed

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annually to the Casa dei Catecumeni; thus they are compelled to pay for the propagation of the doctrines which they abjure. Again, they are forced to pay to the surrounding parishes, as a compensation for the Christian population which might otherwise occupy the area of the Ghetto, the annual sum of one hundred and thirteen scudi. Being under the supervision of Catholic officials, they must also pay two hundred and five scudi for presents to them at Christmas and in August. Again, their own University, supported by their own money, must not be under their own control. Government appoints Christians and Catholics, as the attorney, the accountant, and the tax collector of the Hebrew University: it leaves to the Jew the poor satisfaction of paying the salaries of these officials, at an annual cost of three hundred and sixty scudi. The wonder is, that a people thus oppressed and trodden down has not ceased to exist. We are reminded of the promise: "Though I make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee."

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CHAPTER V.

INVISIBLE BARRIERS—OPPRESSIVE DISABILITIES—A NIGHT WALK THROUGH THE FIUMARA—MYSTERIOUS SOUND.

It remains, before we describe the Ghetto itself, to show what was the actual condition of the Jews in Rome, in the time of which our narrative treats.

On the accession of Pius IX. in 1846 their hopes rose high; his liberal policy extended even to the wretched inhabitants of the Ghetto. At the instance of Don Michele Castani, Prince of Teano, always a sincere advocate of the cause of this unhappy colony, he confided to a commission the examination of its just claims, with authority to enforce them. The first step taken in these reforms was to exempt the Jews from the hated weekly attendance at St. Angelo to hear a sermon against their religion. The walls of the Ghetto were then levelled, no more to be raised, and permission was given to them to reside in the wards of the city adjacent to the Ghetto, and to exercise certain trades before prohibited. But their hopes were soon overcast: days of revolution followed; the

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Pope fled to Gaeta, and on his return, though the rights and privileges conceded to them were not formally repealed, they were silently withdrawn, or so obstructed as to become inoperative. The Ghetto indeed remains unwalled, but hear the words of an Italian Catholic, printed in an Italian newspaper as late as 1862. He raises the question for solution, Why, under so tolerant and liberal a rule as that of Pius IX., the number of Jews in the Pontificial kingdom should have diminished by more than one fourth? "When I was at Rome, he says, "I tried to clear up the matter to my own mind, and I put myself in communication with two respectable individuals of the Ghetto, but as soon as they had learned the motive that had induced me to meddle with their affairs, the poor men, quite terrified, replied, 'Do not bewail us; take care you do not make it public that we are wretched, that the Pope regrets the benefits granted us in 1847; the Ghetto is barred up with invisible but insuperable gates, and now our condition has grown worse than ever.'" Mr. Davidson, who translated for the *Jewish Chronicle* the Italian article from which this extract is taken, adds, "I myself am perfectly convinced that this is really the case; I invariably found the Jews of the Ghetto with whom I conversed in the city, hurrying home before dusk, and when I requested them to stay a little longer, the only reply was, 'We must not be out longer;' which was generally accompanied with some mysterious gestures, which at first I did not

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understand, but from what once inadvertently dropped from one of them, I am quite convinced that there is a secret prohibition against their being outside the Ghetto after dusk had set in."

The same obstructive policy rendered inoperative the permission given to hire houses and open shops beyond the limits of the Ghetto. It was not formally repealed, but after the return of the Pope a stop was put to further emigration, in a way worthy of priestly rule. It belonged to the Cardinal Vicar to grant to any Jew who should ask it, permission to establish himself outside the Ghetto. These permissions had freely been granted at first, but now the patience of the petitioner was taxed by so many vexatious difficulties and delays, that he gave up the attempt in despair.

Let us sum up a few of their disabilities for the the last twenty years, and then see whether it has not been given to them to drink to the very dregs the cup of humiliation in the city of the Popes. They might hold no civil, political or military office; they might engage in no profession or trade of public credit, such as that of advocate, notary, attorney, librarian, goldsmith, manufacturer, smith, stonecutter, or the like. They were excluded from all colleges and foundations of public education, except in the case of the physician, surgeon, and pharmacist, but this exception was clogged with conditions. The public schools, where are taught all the preliminary studies imposed as conditions for this career, such as

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philosophy, Latin, mathematics, and physics, were all closed to them; for the acquirement of these they must depend on private means; and even when thus qualified, admission to the University was only to be obtained by a special authorization obtained from the Cardinal Vicar, and the graduates were bound, as we have seen, to take oath that they would exercise their skill only on Jews. Their diploma, or rather the attestation which they receive in place of it, contained a similar limitation.

Again: they were excluded from all charitable institutions,—hospitals, refuges, public funds for the support of the poor; and this, though taxes from which such institutions are maintained, weighed as heavily on the Jew as on any other citizen.

Land they might neither purchase nor hire. If, as sometimes happened, a Jew hired a farm under cover of the name of some Christian, he might expect to be mercilessly pillaged as soon as it should be discovered that the crops belonged to a Jew, and for such pillage he could expect no redress.

In the courts of justice the same ignominious treatment awaited them. In civil questions their testimony was not admitted at all, and all acts and papers signed by them as witnesses were declared null; they might give evidence in criminal cases, with this humiliating reservation,—that the witness of no Jew, however wealthy or learned he might be, or however trustworthy his character, be taken against that of the meanest Roman Catholic.

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Alas, for them, when they had themselves occasion to appeal for protection to the law! The murder of a Jew, though not permitted, was placed in a very different category of offences from that of a Christian. We quote an instance in which a murderer was let off with a few months imprisonment, the Court having been thus addressed: "Gentlemen, whence comes it that the law punished homicide so severely, even to the taking of life? It is thus, by killing a Christian both body and soul are killed. There is sent before the Supreme Judge a being badly prepared, who has not at all cleared himself of the sins he has committed, who has not received absolution, and who drops down insensibly into hell, or at least into purgatory. Here is the reason, I say, why the killing of a Christian can never be sufficiently punished. But we, whom have we killed? None other than a miserable Jew, already damned, who, if he had a hundred years time for his conversion (ye know the obstinacy of the cursed race) would have died like an ass, without confession. I do not deny that we have shortened by a few years the due execution of Divine judgment, we have hurried him to that eternity of pain which he could not escape either before or after. But be lenient, gentlemen, on the occasion of a venial fault, and reserve your severity for those who strike at the salvation and life of a Christian." This is the cruel logic which prevails, when it is the question to punish the murderer of a Jew!

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For the redress of all lesser wrongs, the Jews were referred to an exceptional tribunal, under the jurisdiction of the Inquisition, and especially of the criminal tribunal of the Cardinal Vicar; here all is arbitrary, and depends on the disposition and caprice of an individual.

Such was, at the time of which our narrative treats, the social status of the Jew in Rome: can we wonder that his moral condition was affected by it; do we wonder to find him cunning, abject, servile, imbruted in features, and debased in mind? Above all do we wonder at the deep loathing with which he regards the Christianity presented to him in so distorted a form: when the alternative offered to him is to be a worshipper of Mary, can we wonder, we had almost said can we regret, that he adheres tenaciously to the creed of his Fathers? Nay rather, do we not yearn to remove with tender hand the veil which hides from him his own Redeemer King, to whom the outcasts of Israel are dear, and who will one day "make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

Let us now place ourselves by Ben Ezra's side, while he traverses the narrow confines of the Ghetto. Stepping out from the Piazza del Pianto, he enters a narrow and dirty street where the common class of Jews congregate, and where, it being now close upon nightfall, the patient bearers of old clothes-bags are congregating, after having pursued for long hours in the city the one avocation left open to them. It would be hard to say what they have not collected;

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and the men have thrown down their sacks and are taking a little well-earned repose, while their Sarahs and Rebeccas busily sort the unsavoury contents of their bundles, and already see *in futuro* the magic change which their needles will effect in the lack-lustre and frowsy articles under consideration. Children, squalid and neglected, are rolling about in the dirt, happy and unconcerned while left unmolested in their self-chosen amusements, though they be children of the Ghetto. There is one of our five senses the exercise of which we would gladly forego while in its precincts. How respiration can go on, and human life be sustained in an atmosphere so foul, it is hard to conceive! What would not Ben Ezra have given at times to have had at his command some of the deserted and airy palatial houses of Rome for the benefit of his half stifled patients. Four thousand human beings crowded into a space which three of those palaces would have covered: no wonder that every house was packed from garret to basement, every cupboard made available for human habitation!

We are proceeding slowly down this street, the Fiumara, for the narrow street itself is the common saloon of the inhabitants, and is proportionately crowded. The houses are of the most wretched description, and each door (hung round with every variety of re-furbished garment) leads into a dark shop, unpromising enough in appearance, but where precious things lie "perdu" which may be obtained after hard bargaining.

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Ben Ezra dived into one of the wretched houses half way down the Fiumara, where a patient lived to whom his visit was the event of the day. To any one unacquainted with the locality, it might have seemed somewhat magical that his re-appearance was at the far end of the street; but the fact is, that all the houses of the Fiumara communicate by the upper story, and to any one as well versed as he was with these haunts of pain and poverty, it would have been easy to pass from one end of the street to the other, on a high level within the houses. This architectural peculiarity has its value when the Tiber over-flows, as frequently happens in the autumn and winter, and the inhabitants of the Ghetto are driven to the upper stories of their miserable tenements.

Ere he re-appeared Ben Ezra's well-known skill and kindness had been bespoken for several other cases beside the one he went to visit, and the opportunity of freely exercising benevolence had proved the best cordial to a dejected spirit. It was with a firm and elastic tread that he turned an angle to the left, and entered the Piazza di Santa Maria, in Pescheria. Before him stood the church from which it derived its name, an uncouth structure occupying the site of the ancient temple of Juno, once surrounded by the splendid Portico of Octavia. A few of its beautiful Corinthian columns are still standing, and the two centre ones fronting the Piazza are connected by the lofty brick arch which Septimus Severus threw between them.

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The moon shone brightly now, and Ben Ezra lingered for a few moments under the arch to drink in the beauty of the soft summer night.

His eye was irresistibly attracted to the silver lamp of heaven, which in these southern skies, appears, not as with us, a *disc*, but a *globe* of light, suspended in the transparent ether.

"Oh, moon!" thought he, "faithful witness in heaven, where is thy light shining? Hast thou sent thy beams into the vale of Jehoshaphat, and touched with silver the brook Kedron? Doth Olivet lie under thy calm radiance, and are the daughters of my people raising to thee tearful eyes as they weep by the walls of our city? How long, O Lord? Remember Thy word which came to Jeremiah the prophet, 'If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, that there should not be day and night in their season..... then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy upon them.'* Our iniquities indeed testify against us; but be not wrath very sore, neither remember iniquity for ever. Return, for Thy servant's sake, the tribes of Thine inheritance; Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness and Jerusalem a desolation. Wilt thou refrain Thyself for these things, O Lord? wilt Thou hold Thy peace and afflict us very sore?"

* Jeremiah xxxiii. 20, 26.

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As an intelligent and devout Jew, the yearning of Ben Ezra towards the land of his fathers was strong and deep: he could remember the fervent hopefulness with which, in earlier days, he had adopted the expectation which the Jew expresses, as he closes the solemn services both of the Day of Atonement and of the Passover: "Next year we shall be in Jerusalem; this year we are servants, but next year we hope to be freemen in the land of Israel." So many "next years" had come and gone since then, that the words which used to be so animating, fell cold and dead upon his heart; yet he clung tenaciously to the faithfulness of the covenant, and the promise of a Messiah. Had he been born in a land of toleration, and where evangel light shines undistorted by the medium through which it passes, it might not have been hard to convince his candid mind that the Messiah for whom he waited was to be found in Him of whom he always spoke with reverence as "the great Teacher of Nazareth;" but in the case of Ben Ezra, his firm adherence to the main article of Jewish creed, the unity of God, and a deep horror of idolatry, which he looked upon as the crime for which his fathers had been cast off, tended to enlist every better feeling of his nature against the caricature of Christianity he beheld around him. For whom should he forsake his simple and reverent worship of the God of Israel? for the great goddess of Rome, whose shrines met his eye at every turn? What was there to invite him to such a transfer of

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his allegiance? Not when the yoke of bondage and oppression weighed upon him most heavily did the desire find entrance in his heart to exchange with his oppressors: better to be an exile Jew waiting for the promises, than a purple-robed worshipper of the Queen of heaven.

His meditations were disturbed by a sound as of human breathing close to him, yet as he looked round and saw himself to all appearance alone, he misdoubted his own impression; but the slight interruption recalled him to a recollection of the lateness of the hour, and that Adriel would probably not yet have returned to relieve his mother's anxieties as to the cause of their detention. So with another glance backwards, and a renewal of the impression we sometimes receive, that we are not alone even when no one is to be seen or heard, he stepped out into the moonlight, and turned into the Pescheria, or fish market, the narrow and dirty, but picturesque street on the left. Stone slabs, broken and grappled by iron hooks, stretch out on either side into the street, leaving only space for foot passengers to pass between them. A few hours ago the scene here was lively enough, every kind of fish, alive and dead, furnished by the Mediterranean, was offered for sale; but now nothing remained but the scale-encrusted slabs, with their fishy odour. Great dark holes open from them into the houses behind, begrimed with dirt and smoke. Above stretches an arch supported by black beams, over which is reared

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a series of chambers. Here juts out, on its iron arm, the lantern which illuminates feebly the street at night; and here, in a grimed corner, Jewish prejudices are insulted by a Madonna shrine, with an onion-shaped lamp burning before it. By daylight the eye could hardly have rested on a single object that was not low, filthy, and revolting; yet the mantle of silver radiance now thrown over all, turned each rugged outline to ebon and ivory.

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CHAPTER VI.

A HOME PICTURE — SUDDEN ALARM — THE MURDER OF COSTELLO — THE LOST JEWEL — SEEKING A CLUE.

ARRIVED at the end of the Pescheria, and turning to the right, Ben Ezra entered the Via Rua, a better street, containing a higher class of shops, and tenanted by more prosperous Jews, who possess, or are on the way to possess, some fortune; but still bad enough, and by no means free from the general fetid atmosphere of the Ghetto. Here Ben Ezra had lived from boyhood: the profession of physician had been hereditary in his family for many generations. His own house was situated at the upper end of the Via, and after a short pause at the door, that he might press his lips reverently upon the Mezuzah,* he entered

* "The Mezuzah is a piece of vellum, about three inches square; one side is inscribed with the two following passages of the law: Deut. vi. 4—9, and xi. 13—21; the vellum is then folded about an inch wide, with the writing inside. On the outside is written the Hebrew word Shaddai, one of the names of the Almighty. It is then deposited in a case of tin

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his house. He inquired for his wife, and pushed open the door of an inner room. Deborah's pale face kindled into pleasure; but she laid her finger on her lips, and pointed to their child.

"She pleaded hard to wait thy return, Ben Ezra, and I yielded; but it was a weakness,—she was already wearied out with pleasure, and the heavy eyelids soon drooped in sleep."

He stooped to kiss her as she lay in her infantine beauty, on cushions piled up at her mother's feet; her head thrown back, her lips slightly parted, her luxuriant black ringlets tumbled and tossed; while a wreath of orange blossoms encircled her head like an aureola, and filled the room with a delicate fragrance. She had fallen asleep with a basket of ripe cherries in her hand; the relaxed fingers still encircled the handle, and twitched from time to time, as if to tighten their hold: the round knees were uncovered, and the fairy limbs would have been a study for the

or lead, or a glass tube, which has a hole opposite to the word Shaddai, that it may be seen when passing by. A hole is pierced through both ends of the case, that it may be nailed to the door-post. It is always fixed in a slanting position on the right hand side of going in. This must be done by the master of the house himself; in doing which he says the following blessing: 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast sanctified us with Thy commandments, and commanded us to fix the Mezuzah.' The pious Jew never goes out to his daily avocations without kissing the Mezuzah."—*Mills'* "*British Jews*," p. 29.

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sculptor. The fond parents gazed at their treasure, and then exchanged glances with each other, as if to say, "Yes: we are very rich."

"She has been all day with the Contessa?"

"Yes: Naomi only returned with her at Ave Maria."

"Poor Contessa! it comforts her to have her."

"Yes; and she needs it now. It was in the month of May last year that she lost her child."

"And she thinks Zillah so like her?"

"The image of her; others see it too besides the Contessa."

"What has she had to tell you of her visit?"

"Ah! you recall a serious thought which crossed my mind. Zillah is a babe as yet; but the time will come when she cannot continue her visits. Ben Ezra, these Roman Christians have no God; only a goddess; Zillah must not learn to worship her."

"The Contessa would not"—

"No: I think *she* would not: she is honourable; but she has friends. A young cousin of hers, who is in favour with the Holy Father, and is sure to be a Cardinal some day, was in the carriage with them to-day as they drove down the Campagna. He was greatly taken with the child, and she has prattled of the stories he told her about 'the holy Madonna and the child Jesus, and the Bambino, who cures sick people.' But you have told me nothing of your visit to His Eminence. And where is Adriel? not, I hope, beyond the Ghetto; for he must have a care now to keep well with the authorities."

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Ben Ezra commenced his narration, and Adriel came in in time to tell what happened after his father left him with Dr. Selwyn: but he was less communicative than usual, especially as to what had occurred in Signor Morini's house.

If his tale grew embarrassing, little Zillah covered his retreat; for some humorous fancy visited her dreams, and she woke herself with laughter. She was the acknowledged pet and plaything of the house, and for a few minutes all graver cares were chased by her frolics; but at last her mother bore her away to more uninterrupted slumbers, and on her return the trio gathered round the table for their evening meal.

Ben Ezra, as a devout Jew, was careful in maintaining the observances imposed on him by tradition; nor were they, as observed by him, wholly outward and ceremonial. "I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I compass Thine altar, oh Lord," were words often on his lips, when, after the prescribed washing of hands, he gathered with his family round the household board. The Jewish notion is, that the table during the time of meals represents the altar of the temple, whereon the offerings were burned, and the dishes are compared to the offerings themselves; whatever, therefore, is the nature of the meal, salt must always be upon the table, in reference to the command, "Upon all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." The board is blessed with the words, "Blessed be Thou, oh Lord our God, King of the

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universe, who bringest forth bread from the earth." They then dip a bit of bread in the salt, which they eat as an offering to God. When the meal is over, all knives and forks must be removed, because we are told no iron or steel was made use of about the altar. Before the concluding grace it is usual to repeat on working days Psalm cxxxvii., and on Sabbaths and festivals Psalm cxxvi. The concluding grace itself is a long one, and must always be said by the master of the house.

We are not disposed to smile at these observances; they are, as it were, the high water mark, to show that there have been men who led a sacramental life, and to whom the most ordinary occurrences of daily routine were replete with spiritual meaning. Doubtless now in a large majority of cases, the sign no longer suggests the thing signified, and the bare and worthless form is readily abandoned; but we cling to the belief, that there are among the sons of Israel, truth-loving souls like Ben Ezra's, who, cherishing the twilight in which they have been nurtured, are prepared to welcome the gladdening beams of the Sun of righteousness, when God's time is come for the day-dawn to arise in their hearts.

They were turning from the table, when Naomi put her head in at the door, and inquired for her master.

Something unusual in her voice caused him to look up quickly, and, doing so, he caught sight of a face blanched with terror. Deborah had happily

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turned to encircle her son with a motherly embrace, and neither saw nor heard. Ben Ezra gave Naomi a warning glance, and followed her till she was out of hearing of her mistress.

"Something has happened, Naomi? I am wanted?" She pointed with horror to traces of blood upon the threshold; the moonlight streamed in through the open door.

"They would have left him here," she said; "but it was no sight for *her*," with a gesture towards the room they had left, "and his house is near."

"But who is it? What has happened?"

"Signor Costello, waylaid in the Piazza di Sta. Maria! Such wounds! He struggled hard, they say, for life;" and the poor woman shuddered in the recollection of the ghastly scene she had witnessed.

"He is taken home, you say?"

"Yes: by this time he must be there."

Laying his hand hastily on a few of the most necessary appliances which the urgency of the case might require, Ben Ezra turned to leave the house, with a parting caution to Naomi: "You have done well in sparing your mistress. Let her know that I am called out, and may be absent all night: she must not wait for me." So saying, he left the house, and Naomi wiped the tell-tale traces from the threshold.

Ben Ezra knew his poor neighbour by sight and repute, and hastened to find him in his low, miserable house, not a stone's throw from the ruins of the

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Portico of Octavia. Looking across to the arch under which he had stood earlier in the evening, he recalled the impression he had then received,—that someone lay concealed in its shadow, and could not doubt that the assassin, whoever he might be, was then and there waiting his victim. But the duty of the moment was to examine into his injuries, and see if any hope remained for his life. Ben Ezra, therefore, did not relax his speed till he found himself within Costello's door.

They had just laid him upon his bed, and were gazing with the look of helpless indecision so often shown by the Jews when death appears inevitable; for they shrink in such cases from giving even a drop of water or of medicine, lest it should hasten the moment of dissolution, and they should thus incur the guilt of bloodshedding.

All made way for Ben Ezra. The sufferer was able to swallow a restorative, and for the moment was revived; but a short examination of his injuries proved to Ben Ezra that any rallying of his powers must be temporary. He warned him of his danger, and (alas, that he had no better teaching to impart!) entreated him to make the best use of the time which remained to reconcile himself to his Creator.

"The angel of death, Costello, stands at thy feet; but the God of Israel is near thee, the Shechinah rests on thy head. In one moment, by one pious deed, thou mayest gain eternal life: pray then." In low, earnest tones Ben Ezra repeated for him the

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last prayer of the dying Jew: "Oh, may my sincere repentance, my trouble, my death, be an atonement for all my sins, by which I have sinned, offended, and trespassed before Thee during my earthly pilgrimage. Oh God, doom not my soul to perdition, but grant me a portion in the garden of Eden, there to join the righteous, and may my soul be bound up in the bundle of life."

Again Ben Ezra administered a restorative; the flame of life shot up afresh. Costello feebly raised his hand, and laid it on the head of his wife, who knelt beside him, stifling her sobs as she buried her face in the bed clothes. "Miriam!" he murmured. "Where is Miriam?"

"We have sent for her. Oh, live till she comes, Ephraim! live to give her a father's blessing!"

Footsteps were heard outside; but it was only the members of the Burial Society,* who had come to take their customary duties in the chamber of sickness and death. For a few moments all was silence; then light rapid footsteps mounted the dark and narrow stair, and in breathless haste a young girl glided through the little crowd of spectators, and

* In the Jewish community, each synagogue provides for the burial of its own dead. When death is imminent, notice is sent to the officers of the Burial Society, who send four of their number to attend at the death of the sick person, perform for him all the Jewish ceremonies of ablution, and remain with the corpse till it shall have been placed in the coffin.

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fell on her knees beside her mother. She had not looked,—she dared not look; but she craved that without which a Jewish child feels doubly bereaved, —the last blessing of a dying parent.

A gleam of tenderness lit up the dying features; the fluttering heart beat again more evenly; for strong emotions, whether of joy or love, have no fellowship with death.

"It was for thee,—all for thee. Now God in heaven help thee, Miriam, my darling. Fly the danger, if thou canst; but be firm."

One effort more. With his already cold hand resting on her brow, he tried to give utterance to the final blessing, "The Lord bless thee, and *keep* ——;" but this was the last word that could be distinguished; and while the few laboured breathings were drawn that yet remained, those whose office it was to do so, took their customary place full in view of the dying man, and repeated in the usual distinct and solemn tones the parting words:

"The Lord reigneth, the Lord hath reigned, the Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

"Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever.

"The Lord is the only God.

"Hear, oh Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord."

* * * * * *

Ben Ezra had withdrawn before this last ceremony; for he was desirous to lose no time in inquiring into the circumstances of the assassination, and judging

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what possibility there was of obtaining some redress for the family of the murdered man. He was well aware that on him, as one of the most influential Jews of the Ghetto, it would chiefly devolve to bring the outrage before the arbitrary tribunal appointed to judge of wrongs suffered by his nation.

He summoned from the chamber of death those who had borne the victim to his home, and begged for a statement of facts.

There was evidently reluctance to tell the circumstances, and a painful mixture of the cunning and servility which too often mark the lowest class of Jews, in their way of affording the following meagre details, which we shall give currently, though it was drawn out by Ben Ezra, bit by bit, after close cross questioning.

They all lived in the same house in the Piazza Santa Maria, not a stone's throw from the Arch. Their day's work in the city, as collectors of old clothes, had been unusually productive; and after their customary hour for closing their window and retiring to rest, they were still busily engaged in sorting and appraising the contents of their bags. In the inner room they had a lamp; but the outer one was brilliantly lighted by the moon. The sound of footsteps and the shadows of passers-by caused one of them to look up, and he saw Ephraim Costello and a younger man pass the window. They were talking, and the accent of the younger was not Jewish.

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They had all broken off their employment for a few moments to look and to listen, when they heard, or thought they heard, a cry, and the younger man fled past their window again in the opposite direction. They heard, after this, sounds of a scuffle, and repeated cries; then again all was still. They had almost ceased to listen, when they saw a figure emerge slowly and painfully from the Arch, and sink almost immediately upon the ground. They went to his assistance, and found Costello alone and wounded; the murderer had fled.

It was difficult for Ben Ezra to repress his indignation as he extorted from them the few last particulars.

"You looked, you listened, you waited, while cries for help were wringing in your ears. You, three strong men, who might have overpowered the assassin, and dragged him to the light of day. And you are Jews, and the victim was one of yourselves: had you no fear that the God of Israel would require at your hands the innocent blood?"

"The Signor says we are Jews," muttered one of the men, with downcast look: "he knows whether the Jew will get justice at the hands of His Eminence the Cardinal Vicar; he knows whether we poor men can afford to exchange our daily rounds in the city for an attendance week after week on the tribunal, —no payment for our time, no certainty when the case will come on; and the Signor knows too, that if the murderer was a Christian, as most likely he was,

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the evidence of twenty Jews would not convict him."

"God in heaven forgive you," returned he: "that these miserable calculations stifled in you the voice of human pity. How will you bear the sight of the new made widow and that orphan girl? But was Costello himself unable to give any account? did he name his companion?"

"He was near fainting when we reached him; but we caught the words, 'Help, Steffano! follow him! he has taken all!'"

"And you did not follow? you did not help?"

Again the downcast look. "Costello wanted help most. We brought him to your house, Signor; he spoke no more to us; but he roused at his wife's first cry, and whispered a few words to her. Will the Signor see her?" continued he, anxious to bring to an end an examination which reflected so little credit on himself and his companions.

Ben Ezra sought the widow. She could hardly have borne to have her grief touched by any other hand; but natural tenderness of disposition, and long familiarity with suffering in all its forms, had imparted to Ben Ezra a dexterity in sympathy which won ready confidence. She felt that his inquiries were dictated by no impertinent curiosity, and help was written on every line of his manly and capable features. From her he gathered the following information.

Ephraim and herself were Roman born and bred, and, for all the earlier years of their married life,

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had borne in its rigour the heavy yoke laid upon them by Roman priestcraft. The massive gates of the Ghetto had closed upon them at sunset, the arbitrary summons of the sbirri had driven them to the detested worship in St. Angelo; but they bore all, as those accustomed to the yoke, passively, tamely. By careful economy, the miserable traffic in old clothes yielded enough for present wants, and provided a little hoard for a rainy day. An elder brother of Ephraim's died without children, and bequeathed to him his own savings, and to his little niece Miriam a magnificent ruby, long an heirloom in the family, to be presented at her betrothal.

Ephraim's thoughts now turned to the emancipation of himself and his wife and child. At Leghorn, the Jews are affected by no legal disabilities of caste, and he wished to invest his money in some business which would offer a prospect of increasing it. Old ties, however, bound him to Rome, and the change was still only in contemplation when the accession of Pius IX., and the liberal treatment of the Jews which marked his early policy, seemed to promise to Ephraim in Rome itself the advantages he hoped to secure in Leghorn. At least he was resolved on making the trial, and secured for a short term of years a convenient shop beyond the limits of the Ghetto.

These were bright days with himself and his wife. He made a connection rapidly, and Miriam received an education befitting the social position in which they hoped one day to place her.

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Before the expiration of the term for which Ephraim had taken his house, the political changes had happened to which we have before adverted, and the Jews were made to feel, though covertly, that they were again placed under the ban of tyrannical oppression.

So Ephraim found to his cost; for on applying to the Cardinal Vicar for a renewal of his lease and license, the only answer vouchsafed to him was an order to close his shop; some alleged informality in the license was made the excuse for the command. Protests and remonstrances were unavailing, and the unhappy Jew found himself compelled to sell off his goods at a merely nominal value. The little hoard of his own savings and the money left him by his brother was dissipated, and nothing remained for him but to return to his former abject life as an old clothesman in the city.

It was hard for himself and his wife, but the day of life with them was wearing through; the yoke might be galling, but it was laid on shoulders rendered callous by long habit. It was a different matter when their thoughts turned to Miriam, their pride, their darling, their loving and duteous child,—must *she* return to the squalor of the Ghetto, must they renounce all the fair hopes they had cherished for her present and future advancement, must the ruby remain the sole relic of the marriage portion with which they had hoped to endow her?

It was at this time that an English amateur artist,

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who was spending with his family a winter in Rome and who wished to leave no point of interest unvisited, passed, with looks of pity and curiosity, through the wretched Jewish quarter. Miriam was standing at her father's door, with a pitcher of water poised upon her head. Her face, entirely Jewish in its type, and in the first bloom of girlish beauty, struck him as invaluable for a study of "Rebecca at the well." It was easily arranged with her parents that she should come to his studio, and the picture when finished was so successful that other artists begged for an introduction to the fair model. This was an unexpected opening; the terms on which she was engaged were unusually liberal, and her parents were able to secure for her a home in the family of a respectable tradesman who resided in that part of the city where her patrons were most numerous.

It would have been difficult to say wherein consisted the peculiar charm of her appearance. Among the sitters in the schools, many could boast of features more regular, a complexion more brilliant, an outline more faultless; but they had not the easy grace of movement, the purity of expression, the innocent confidence which seemed to find friends and protectors in all who surrounded her, and above all, the innate dignity and modest reticence which threw a shield over her, and might well have made it impossible to offer to her a disrespectful word. Miriam Costello was all this, and her form and features reflected it. More than once she had sat as a

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"Study for a Psyche;" but lately a higher honour had been designed for her, one of which her good friend Rosa Vitelli, the wife of the tradesman with whom she lived, assured her she ought to be very proud. An altar-piece of the "Annunciation," intended for a private oratory in the palace of a Monsignor Frascutari, was to be painted on the spot, and the eminent artist entrusted with the work selected Miriam as a suitable study for the figure of the Virgin. The Monsignore was a frequent inspector of the work, Miriam felt unaccountably repelled by his look and manner. She blamed her own ingratitude; for his words were gentle, even parental, and surely it was very kind in so great a Signor to notice her. He questioned her as to her parents and her home, and on this subject he found her ready enough. Her tones, her voice, were full of touching pathos, as she described her father's disappointed hopes, and the life of hardship and privation to which he had now returned. "It was impossible to call him poor," the Monsignore said, "while he had such a child;" and he hinted that "it rested with her to restore to him all that he had lost." Miriam fixed on him her large wondering eyes; their innocence disarmed him, and he left her. But when she returned to Vitelli's house, she found a costly jewel awaiting her, accompanied by a communication from him, the contents of which sent her breathless and terrified to the arms of the motherly friend who sheltered her.

Rosa Vitelli knew far better than Miriam how

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grave was the danger which threatened her protégée, nor could she herself continue to shelter her without incurring pains and penalties which she had not courage to contemplate for herself and her family. She lost no time in communicating with Ephraim, and urging him, as he valued his daughter's safety, to escape with her and his wife to Leghorn. She suggested that the jewel sent by her admirer might well provide the means of their flight; but to this proposal Ephraim would not listen for a moment. No: the last relic of his Miriam's dowry must be sacrificed, and Vitelli having a brother who was employed by one of the first jewellers in Rome, undertook to get the ruby valued. It was with a sore heart that Ephraim took it from its secret hiding-place. How often had he pictured Miriam under the bridal canopy, with the magnificent ruby sparkling on her bosom; but it was better bestowed in saving than in adorning her, and no time was to be lost. Unfeigned indisposition following the alarm she had undergone might excuse for a few days her attendance upon the artist; but after that was passed, she must either meet or fly the danger.

The jeweller prized the ruby at four hundred and fifty scudi, * and was willing himself to take it at that sum. It was to his glittering shop in the

* The English reader may like to know that the current coin in the States of the Church is in baiocchi, pauls, and scudi. A baiocco represents about ½d.; a paul, 5½d.; and a scudi, 4s. 3½d., of English money.

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Piazza Navona that poor Ephraim Costello was bound on the afternoon of this fatal day.

Such was the sorrowful story which, with many interruptions, was confided to Ben Ezra by the widow, as she sat alone with him on the first night of her desolation; and she had little to add to it,—almost nothing that could supply any clue for tracking the assassin. He must have been cognizant of the visit of the Jew to Signor Boccacio's shop in the Piazza Navona: he might have been one of the *employés* of the shop, and within hearing when the sale was effected, and the stipulated sum handed over to Costello; or he might have been a mere shop lounger at the time. The former supposition offered most hope of detection, and Ben Ezra resolved on a visit to Signor Boccacio early the next morning.

He blamed himself for not having verified his suspicion that the Arch was hiding in its recesses another besides himself at an earlier hour of the evening; yet as the murderer had been allowed by the cowardice of the Jews to make good his escape, identification would have been equally impossible. He hoped that he might find some clue in the few words spoken by Costello to his wife; but on questioning her he found she had with difficulty been able to distinguish any thing; his only words, so far as she could catch them, were, "He has robbed me of all: the God of Israel save our Miriam."

Ben Ezra mentioned to her the name of Steffano he had uttered in the ears of those who first reached

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the scene of the murder; but this information left her equally at a loss. "He might have many acquaintances of that name," she said, "and might have been glad, as he had a large sum of money about him, to accept the company of the 'Steffano' who so cruelly deserted him; but this measure was not preconcerted, and he had told her nothing of it."

Ben Ezra felt that he had a tangled web to unravel, but nothing could be done till the morning. He left her with the mental resolve, that, if no redress could be obtained, the widow and her daughter should not be left without the means to escape the danger which threatened them.

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CHAPTER VII.

DR. SELWYN—ZILLAH'S SECRET—A POSSIBLE CLUE—MYSTERIES UNRAVELLED.

As you will, *Nonna mia:* but the evenings are still fresh and cool; and I am better to-day: almost well," said Juliet, with an attempt at smiling, which ended in a nervous twitching of her under lip, and a sound that must have been a sob, if it had not been so quickly caught and repressed.

A week had passed since her father's death, and Juliet's newly-recovered strength had ill borne the strain of the severe and sudden shock. The weather, too, had been more summerly than usual; and already the streets, when the sun was at its height, gave evidence of the noonday siesta. It was now the cool hour of evening; the windows and venetians, which had been carefully closed since sunrise, were thrown open, and a pleasant breeze played with the light drapery which hung over Juliet's couch.

"We would leave Rome only for a short time, my child," said Mrs. Percival, "to give you back your sleep and appetite, Juliet."

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At this moment Guiseppe announced a visitor; his name was only caught by Juliet, who changed colour, and sprung from her sofa. Mrs. Percival was about to remonstrate with the servant for his precipitation, when the guest entered, and she at once recognized Dr. Selwyn. She dreaded the excitement for Juliet, and would have withdrawn with him to another room, but he had already advanced to her, and taken her small trembling hand in his, with a look of so much pity and almost parental solicitude, that Mrs. Percival ventured to hope his visit might prove soothing to her grandchild.

"It is very kind of you to have come," said Juliet, trying to steady her voice. "I have wanted to hear all,—all, from quite the beginning. I can bear it, thank you," said she, in answer to his doubtful look, as he replaced her on the sofa, and put a cushion under her head. He exchanged glances with Mrs. Percival, but she knew all the quiet resolution which was hidden under that soft, shrinking exterior, and nodded assent.

"I cannot tell you quite from the beginning, Signorina," he said. "I was summoned to attend your father by my friend Signor Ben Ezra Luppino, who was with him at his first seizure in the Piazza Montanara."

"Ah, yes! he was here with you on that terrible day."

"No: that was his son. He, too, was with your father from the first."

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"Where do they live? Can I see them? I want to know if—if my father spoke any last words; if he sent me any message."

"It is not likely, from the nature of the seizure, that he can have done so, Signorina. He would probably lose consciousness in the moment of his fall. But on this point my friend can satisfy you, for he and his son were passing at the time, and received him in their arms. He is a Jew, and lives in the Via Rua. He is a man of great worth, and enjoys a high professional reputation in the Ghetto and its neighbourhood. Shall I ask him to call on you?"

Juliet did not at once answer. Perhaps only those who are Roman born and bred, can understand the social stigma which attaches both to the Jew and to his abode; and Dr. Selwyn and Mrs. Percival would both have been surprised had they known the amount of repugnance with which the girl regarded the proposed visit. After a few moments' delay, she said quietly, "His kindness to my father should make him welcome here, Dr. Selwyn: ask him, if you please, to come."

"Let it be soon," added Mrs. Percival, "for we were speaking as you came in, Dr. Selwyn, of a little change for my grandchild. The weather is sultry, and for several days she has hardly eaten or slept."

"May I claim a doctor's privilege," said he, with a smile, drawing his chair near, and laying his finger

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on her slender wrist. "Yes:" he said, "change of air and scene would be very good, but"—and as he thought of his own blooming children, and of all that they were to him, and he to them, his look became so wistful and fatherly, that the orphan child struggled in vain for self-control, and buried her face in the cushion.

Dr. Selwyn looked concerned, and would have withdrawn, but she extended her hand to him, and said, "Thank you for understanding so well. You will come again? it does me good."

Mrs. Percival followed him from the room. When alone with her he could not forbear a warm tribute of admiration for her interesting charge. He cordially seconded her proposal to take her for a time to other scenes.

"Yes," said Mrs. Percival: "she has two natures, —English firmness and Italian passions, and her mastery over strong emotion is wearing away her life."

"We must provide her with other interests, and that will be easier anywhere than here. But I will send to her the Signor Medico Luppino; it will not be likely that he can tell her more than she already knows, but she must not be left to imagine that anything is concealed from her." So saying he took leave, and Mrs. Percival returned to find her grandchild restored to composure, though looking still paler and more shadowy than before.

Dr. Selwyn determined to call in the Via Rua

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before he returned home, for his thoughts were pre-occupied with Juliet. He was surprised to find his friend's *portone* locked, though the hour was only just past sunset; nor was it opened till an inquiring head had appeared for a moment at an upper window, and had been as quickly withdrawn. Then a light footstep crossed the passage, and entered a side door. Not till this was closed, did Naomi make her customary appearance.

A little mystified, but concluding that some patient wished to escape observation, he followed Naomi into the common sitting room, where, after saluting Signora Luppino, he inquired for her husband.

"For a week, Doctor, I have hardly seen him. He has been incessantly engaged in—in a very difficult case."

"Ah! it has ended, I hope, successfully?"

"It has not ended, but—we do not speak of it."

A courteous bow seemed to assure her that she had no impertinent curiosity to fear from him.

"I had come to ask whether he and Adriel could spare an hour to-morrow morning, to pay a call in the Largo della Impresa."

"Where Signor Morini lived?"

"Yes: I want them to see his daughter. Poor child, her heart is almost broken for her father, and she thinks they may be able to tell her of last words before he became unconscious, for they were with him when he fell."

"Ben Ezra will, I am sure, wait on the young

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lady, Doctor. I would rather not tell Adriel of her wish." A shade of asperity was evident on Deborah's usually kind and gentle features, but it passed, and she took Dr. Selwyn's hand. "Doctor, you are our friend; you are English; in your eyes the Jew is exiled, unfortunate, but not disgraced. My brave boy! he must bow his neck to the yoke; but while his mother lives, she will, wherever she can, shield him from contempt. Doctor, the Signorina Morini is fair, and young, and rich. My boy had a passing glimpse of her at her father's door, and again at his death-bed; and, but that he keeps no secret from his mother, he might now be a prey to unavailing wishes and regrets. He tells of an old lady who was English, and who with winning kindness invited his return; but I cannot tell how even *she* might have felt, had she known that he belongs to the outcast and despised Jews. Forgive my vehemence, Doctor, Adriel is sensitive and proud,—too proud, so capable of suffering! and as yet his life has been happy, even in the Ghetto."

Their conversation was broken by little Zillah, who, throwing the door wide open, to admit her small person, was beginning to disburden herself of her message before she had well entered the room. She caught sight of Dr. Selwyn, who, being an acknowledged favourite, held out his arms for her without fear of repulse.

"Well, Zillah, what is your message? Is it for me?"

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"Not for you, Doctor," said she, bridling with importance. "I must not say it loud, it's *the secret;*" and then, in a tone intended for a whisper, but loud enough to be heard in the passage,—"Mamma, may Miriam come out of the ante-room now?"

"Commend me to Zillah for keeping secrets," said Deborah, laughing; then in a low voice to the child, —"Run away now, I am busy. Miriam had better keep with Naomi."

She vanished as quickly as she had entered. "I hear my husband's footstep, Dr. Selwyn. I could not speak of the case which has been occupying him without his permission, but he will, I am sure, be glad to do so, and to avail himself of your advice."

Ben Ezra entered, wearied and dispirited, and seated himself by his wife. The short Roman twilight was fast deepening into night. He thought himself alone with her. "Miriam must not stay much longer here," he said: "her retreat is discovered. I have seen twice to-day the secretary of this Monsignore in the Via Rua, and he tries to elude me; but now he was almost at our door, talking with a man whom I believe to be a servant of the household. They raised their voices, and took care to have other business to speak of as I passed. But to shelter Miriam here, is like interposing a screen of rushes between the tiger and his prey."

"Ben Ezra, Dr. Selwyn is here: he has waited to see you."

"You have a difficult matter in hand, I fear, my

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friend," said the Doctor, coming forward; "and as for your wife (the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her), she was silent as the grave, though she believed you would yourself consult me."

"Gladly and thankfully, Doctor."

The story was long, even to the point with which the reader is already acquainted. It was at Deborah's suggestion that they had offered shelter to poor Miriam. It was essential that she should not return to Rosa Vitelli, who neither could nor would protect her; and if some unknown and unsuspected retreat could be provided for her for a short time, arrangements might be made for her leaving Rome in safety. Great vigilance had been needful. Ben Ezra himself brought her to his home under cover of night, and she had been seen by none but the members of the family. Little Zillah's loquacity presented a serious difficulty, but by making her in part a sharer in Miriam's seclusion (for she had been refused to the Contessa for the last week), and by studiously impressing upon her volatile nature that Miriam would get into great trouble if she did not keep "the secret," she had been fairly cautious.

"You say she has been well educated," said Dr. Selwyn. "Would she be above the situation of personal attendant? Families will soon leave Rome for the hills, and she would thus be at the same time under protection and removed to a distance. I would see what could be done." He had his own ideas as to what might be done, and done at once;

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but he preferred not to broach them till he had had a little further time for consideration.

"Yes, it might be the best arrangement. She has education enough for a higher position, but she is too young for tuition, and from tuition in a Gentile family she is excluded by creed and race."

Dr. Selwyn then opened his commission on behalf of Juliet, and asked Ben Ezra if he could meet him there in the morning?

"It must be at a very early hour, then, for my days are consumed with a useless attendance at the Criminal Court in behalf of Costello's poor widow. It is always difficult enough to obtain justice in Rome. I am ready to subscribe to the opinion that to be an accuser is only one degree better than to be accused, even where the murder of a Christian is concerned; but if it be the case of a Jew, it seems idle to expect it. I have afforded more than one clue to the police, but they shrug their shoulders, and say, 'A Jew: ah! we wait for orders.' I appeal to the Court for orders, and they say to me, 'Attend in person, and bring your case forward.' I do so, and am told day after day that 'other matters are on hand;' meanwhile the murderer is no doubt safely beyond the frontier, enjoying his unlawful spoil."

"Have you been able at all to trace it to any individual?"

"I have suspicions (but they are very vague, and several links of evidence are needed to confirm them)

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that the deed was done by a member of Monsignor Frascatari's household."

"What! the Monsignor from whom Miriam is hiding?"

"Yes. Day had already dawned before I left Costello's house, after the murder: before returning home I went to explore the scene of the outrage. The blood of the poor victim showed plainly enough where the struggle had taken place. One of Costello's hands was cruelly gashed, the other quite uninjured, as if with one he grappled with his enemy, while the other, concealed under his dress, grasped his treasure.

"A small object saturated with blood rewarded my search: a little fragment of cloth attached to a button of twisted gold thread, had been severed with a clean cut from the garment to which it belonged; the assassin had probably thus tried to free himself from the grasp of the victim, for a portion of skin from the end of a finger adhered to the cloth. This supposition was confirmed by one of the injuries received by Costello. Now it was clear the button and cloth belonged to no part of *his* dress; the decoration is such an one as I have seen a hundred times on the servants of our episcopal princes. He probably wore an outer cloak for concealment, but his having come at all on such an errand, in his usual dress, would look as if it were a sudden and hasty purpose, either of his own or of the instigator of the act, which could not brook the delay of pecautionary measures."

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"Well, yes: perhaps so:—go on."

"I went home for a few hours; and as early as I thought Bocaccio's shop would be open I hastened to the Piazza Navona. He was at home; courteous, but, as it appeared to me, only bent on avoiding the annoyance of any connection, however remote, with a criminal case. 'He never employed,' he said, 'either clerks or shopmen whose characters were not above suspicion, the risk, considering the valuable property they had to deal with, would be too great;' besides none of his employés slept off the premises. He had none of the name of Steffano; and to the best of his knowledge none were absent at the time at which I had described the murder as having taken place.

"'Was the shop full,' I asked, 'when Costello received the money?'

"'*My* shop, Signor Medico, is seldom otherwise than full,' he answered, with an important look: 'but it was not in the shop that I transacted business with the poor Jew, but in this very room, Signor. Here is his receipt, poor man,' said he, showing me his signature to a paper which acknowledged the sale of the ruby, and the price paid for it.

"I felt more than ever baffled, but asked 'Will you allow me, Signor Bocaccio, to see a jewel, the sale of which has cost its former owner his life?'

"'I would gladly do so, Signor, but that I have already disposed of it. Monsignor Frascatari, one of my best patrons, came in to pay for a recent purchase,

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and I showed him the ruby; which was, to say the truth, one of rare size and lustre.'

"'Did he know the history of the jewel?'

"'Ah, I told him (pardon me Signor) it was fished up from the Ghetto, and that a poor Jew, distracted for money had parted with it (pardon me again, Signor) for a *reasonable* sum, I could therefore sell it again reasonably. I might have kept the figure to myself; but nothing escapes Monsignor Frascatari. Costello's receipt was on the table: he saw it, and pretending to start, offered me 100 scudi more than I had given. I might have had a higher sum, but Monsignor has been a friend to me.'

"This was all I was likely to ascertain from Signor Bocaccio, and I took my leave with thanks for his courtesy; I had however ascertained an important point,—there were no witnesses to the money received by Costello, therefore neither an employé of the shop, nor a casual bystander had been tempted with the knowledge that he carried away with him a heavy sum. You will think me very suspicious, Doctor, if I allow that my mind fastened on the fact, that this knowledge was shared only by Monsignor Frascatari and Bocaccio, who is above suspicion."

"Surely a Monsignor ought to be more so!"

"You have lived months in Rome, Doctor, I have spent my life here: the rottenness which underlies all this priestly glitter is past belief. I do not mean that the 450 scudi tempted the personal avarice of Monsignor Frascatari; but I do think it more than

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probable that having drawn from the unconscious Miriam her father's name and circumstances, and aware of his own criminal intentions, conscience was quick to whisper that the sum of which Costello professed such urgent need, was to be spent in flying from the threatened danger, and cunning suggested that the way to keep Miriam in Rome was to deprive the family of the means of escape; a hint to a confidential servant, with a promise that the booty should be his, and no disagreeable inquiries made about it, would be enough. Yes, to my mind suspicion is strong, but evidence is wanting; and probably, such is the course of law in Rome, will never be obtained."

"You have discovered nothing of the Steffano who is said to have been Costello's companion?"

"Only thus much, that I paid a visit to the artist, ostensibly to excuse Miriam's non-appearance, but I wished to find out whether his work could be completed without her: he made light of her absence, so my mind was at rest on that score. 'A month ago,' he said, 'it would have been otherwise: no other face could have expressed the innocent awe and wonder his subject required; but now he had secured this, and could even finish his work without her.' He seemed interested in her. 'The Holy Virgin shield the *poveretta*,' he said: 'such innocence as hers is fitter for the Garden of Eden than for bishops' palaces. Steffano's love may be honest, but the *eagle stoops* only for a *victim*.'

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"'Who then,' I said, 'is Steffano?'

"'One of the Monsignor's lacqueys,' he replied, 'whose office it was to wait on me in the chapel: he was well content with his post, I can assure you.'

"'Was Miriam,' I inquired, 'aware of his feelings?'

"'He would have been a fool,' replied he, 'to betray them before his lord; and Monsignor Frascatari paid great attention, we will say, *to the progress of the work*,' continued the artist, with a sneer. 'He is full of zeal, is Monsignor Frascatari, he is jealous for the honour of the Holy Virgin.'

"I took leave of him, after a renewal of his assurance that Miriam's farther services may be dispensed with: he appeared to be honestly concerned for her safety. On reflection, I feel morally certain that the Steffano who admired Miriam, and the Steffano who accompanied Costello are identical. He must have heard Miriam's tale in the chapel, and would naturally show his interest in her by befriending her father."

"How came he then to forsake him in his hour of direst need?"

"Ah, that is another matter altogether. A deed of violence generally clears the streets; for a witness is a marked man for private revenge; and, if my supposition is correct, and it was one of Monsignor's own creatures who robbed and attacked Costello, a subordinate fellow-servant would take good care *not* to be a witness of his crime: on him alone the burden of accusation would have rested, for, as you are pro-

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bably aware, no Jewish evidence can be received against a Christian."

"Iniquitously unjust," said Dr. Selwyn.

"You see then how hopelessly involved the case is. Whether my suspicions be true or not, the discovery and punishment of the perpetrator of the deed are equally unattainable: either the case goes by default, for there is no one to accuse, or the accused party is one on whom no one in Rome will dare to lay a finger. Indeed I have almost come to the conclusion to waste no more time in attendance at the Tribunal, but to bend all my efforts to saving Miriam."

"You will be able to spare an hour then for Signorina Morini: we will meet there, shall we say at ten o'clock, or I will call for you, and we will walk together to the Largo dell' Impresa. Farewell then till to-morrow," and taking leave of Signora Luppino, he left the house, which Ben Ezra took care himself to secure safely against intruders.

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CHAPTER VIII.

A TIMELY VISIT—MIRIAM PROTECTED—A NEW DAY-DAWN—THE LIGHT BRIGHTENS.

ANOTHER sleepless night had reconciled Juliet to a short absence from Rome, and it was almost with interest and pleasure that she listened to Guiseppe, as, presuming on the privileges of an old and attached servant who had known the Signorina from her cradle, he enlarged upon the advantages of this or that place of note or interest in the neighbourhood; as the absence was to be short they did not care to go to any distance. Guiseppe had been a courier in his earlier days, and the pros and cons of the different watering places were at his fingers' ends; but Juliet begged above all things for retirement, and here too his memory was equally fertile. "Would the Signora let him go and see what was to be had at Albano? Ah, he remembered it well! Such noble villas to be hired on the Alban slopes; the rent a bagatelle; the Signorina would sit in the garden all day, and she would paint all she saw, for it was fairy-land for beauty; old crumbling walls, and plashing fountains

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playing over their beds of green moss, and wreathed in maidenhair, and vines, and flowers; and the nightingales singing all day as well as all night, but the Signorina would not hear them at night; ah, no, she would sleep like an infant in this beautiful Albano!"

The man had grown eloquent, and the ladies listened, more than half won by his description.

"It would not be very far?" inquired Juliet.

"Can it be very far when the Signorina will still have in view the dome of St. Peter's, as it rises in the distance? Ah, the view from those Alban hills, it is too beautiful to tell! it must be seen,—the Mediterranean in the horizon, and the Sabine mountains on the west, and the Campagna before you, painted at sunset with every colour of the rainbow!"

Mrs. Percival marked with delight her child's kindling eyes, but their consultation with Guiseppe was interrupted by the arrival of guests, and Dr. Selwyn entered with Signor Medico Luppino.

It is difficult to say what Juliet expected to see in "a Jew from the Ghetto;" it is true that her expectations were qualified by the recollection that she had already seen his son, and though that was at a moment when her mind was too painfully preoccupied to receive or retain any impressions concerning him, yet she knew that had he been glaringly unlike or below humankind in general, she must have remembered it. Half timidly, half reluctantly, she raised her eyes to Signor Luppino, and anyone

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aware of the secret workings of her heart would have been amused at the changed and surprised feelings wrought by one look,—Was this a Jew, and had he come straight from the Ghetto? Impossible! He was a gentleman, perhaps more conspicuously so than Dr. Selwyn himself: faultless in his dress and general appearance, no traditional stoop, no cringing servility, no restless cunning expressed in furtive glances; on the contrary, he was all that was remote from her previous notions of a Jew; his was a dignified and manly bearing, a brow well fitted to command, a forehead calm, high, intellectual, not unmarked by lines of thought and care, yet over all there was a play of kindliness and benevolence, as one has seen a solemn Alpine landscape brightened by genial sunbeams. It was a strange revulsion of feeling; Juliet meant to receive graciously and gratefully the man who had rendered kindness to her father, but already she began to feel herself honoured by his visit, and to choose her words, as one is wont to do before those who command our esteem.

Poor little Juliet! She had lived such a secluded life; with her whole heart she had loved her father, and had wrapped closely the mantle of filial affection round his defects; but in effect her parent had been one to cherish, to excuse, to win by every gentle device to that which her heart and conscience approved. To feel her homage and esteem thus bespoken was new to her, and much as she had desired to know Signor Luppino's story of her father's seizure,

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her attention, as she listened to him, was not wholly undistracted by thoughts of himself.

"I have now told you all, Signorina, up to the moment when I left him in Dr. Selwyn's charge," said Ben Ezra. "There was no conscious suffering," added he kindly.

"And your son?"

"My son accompanied him, till our friend Dr. Selwyn, sent him forward to warn the family; but the unconsciousness was complete from the moment of his seizure. I fear," said he inquiringly, "it continued so to the end?"

Juliet's lip quivered. "He could not answer the priest," said she. But I forgot, Signor Medico: excuse me;" and a deep blush overspread her features.

"Have we not all one Father: hath not one God created us?" said Luppino, gently taking her hand. But at this moment Dr. Selwyn and Mrs. Percival, who had been engaged in a low but earnest conversation in a distant part of the room, drew near, and claimed their attention.

"I have heard the story of your protégé, Signor: will you confide her to my care? We shall leave Rome probably to-morrow, and on my grandchild's account we shall live in great seclusion; I believe therefore a retreat with us will be a safe one."

Juliet's wondering eyes sought her grandmother's. "You shall hear all, my child; if I have spoken without you, it is because I know you too well to

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doubt the interest and pleasure you will feel in my proposal."

Luppino turned to the speaker, and read at once the cordiality of the offer, and the safety with which he might transfer to her, the guardianship he had assumed over the defenceless Miriam. A heavy burden of responsibility seemed taken from his shoulders, and he accepted the offer as frankly as it was made.

After a little time spent in general conversation the doctors withdrew, and Juliet heard from her grandmother the history of Miriam Costello.

One cry of indignation escaped her when she heard of her danger, but otherwise she listened to the tale with compressed lips. Juliet's intimacy with her grandmother was fully established on a footing of mutual endearment and delight in each other; but as yet no word had passed between them as to difference of creed, or to the rottenness of the system in which the poor child had been educated. It had been her father's faith, she could not at present dissociate it from him; but instances like these sunk into her heart, and were brooded on in silence.

A little caution and stratagem were necessary to provide a safe asylum for Miriam, even in a household presided over by an English lady: for where the priest and the confessional hold sway over the servants of a family, employers must be on their guard as to what takes place in their presence. Guiseppe was entrusted with the mission of selecting

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a villa at Albano, but to his disappointment found that Bernard, and not himself was to accompany the ladies in their absence,—an arrangement which excited some hostile feelings against Mrs. Percival, until she enlarged upon her good fortune in having one so trustworthy as himself to leave in charge at home: an office of which, she judiciously hinted, Bernard's inexperience of life in Rome would have made him quite incapable. In like manner Lucia, the personal attendant on the ladies, whose duties had been rendered more onerous by Juliet's indisposition, was permitted to visit her friends during the interval. Miriam, under safe conduct of Dr. Selwyn, was sent forward to Villa Palestro, and her name of Miriam Costello underwent a slight modification, for she was to be called for the present Maria Da Costa.

The kindness which had thus provided for her safety, would have won a less simple and grateful heart than that of Miriam, or Maria, as we must now call her; and Lucia would have been satisfied could she have witnessed the devoted attentions lavished on the Signora and Signorina. Already she seemed to have become rich in friends since the fearful evening which brought her the summons to her father's death-bed; among them none had taken a firmer hold on her affections than the petted, wayward darling, Zillah Luppino; many a tale must Juliet hear of her gamesome, winning ways, as Maria sat on a mossy bank at the foot of Juliet's couch, which was placed al fresco in the lovely garden belonging to the villa.

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"The Signorina must see her; her eyes are full of laughter, and her lips are made for kisses: my Signorina would laugh too, and the load would be lifted from her heart," said Maria, as she pressed her lips on the small white hand which hung listlessly from the couch, and raised her eyes timidly to seek Juliet's.

"It would make me forget, Maria, for a little while, —just a *little* while; but if the heart is empty, it cannot be filled with a little child's laughter."

"The little child comes and goes, but it has opened the door of the empty heart; and the heedless child, all unknowing, leaves the door ajar, and we see the sun shines outside: a ray even steals in through the chink. My Signora will set the door open wide, and step out into the sunshine: she has so much still. She has been chilled by a morning cloud, but a long summer day is before her."

As she spoke, Maria's face assumed the wistful, earnest gaze, which gave a touching beauty to her countenance.

"Ah, no, *Maria mia:* not a passing cloud! I *have* seen such, drawn up by morning beams, and dispersed by noonday sunshine. For me there was no sunrise, Maria. I had no mother: there were fitful gleams of brightness when I saw my father, but I could not be much with him. Everybody liked him, and wanted to have him," said Juliet, with a flash of pride and gratified memory of her father's popularity. "Oh, those cold grey evenings when he was away,

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and I could play no more and read no more, only sit still and think, and go to bed to dream that my mother's arms were round me, and her kisses (such kisses, Maria: so warm, so soft!) pressed upon my cheek! Ah, I have waked and felt it so real! I have said it could not be a dream, and I have tried to sleep again, and entice the sweet thoughts back: but they would never come! The sisters told me I must stay in the Convent, if I wanted a home and would know a mother's love; but I could not leave my father: and I thought the Holy Mother would know this and love me still, though I was in the world. But, ah, I forgot, Maria: forgive me," said Juliet, stopping suddenly, as she remembered she was speaking to a Jewess.

In truth, with Juliet's pre-conceived notions about Jews and Jewesses, it was easy to forget that the gentle girl, separated alike from all low and vulgar notions by education and natural refinement, who understood her griefs so well, and met them with such unobtrusive sympathy, was one of the stubborn and degraded race hitherto associated in Juliet's mind with the name of Jew. That she should take her meals apart (an observance which it would have been painful to her as a Jewess to infringe), had been freely conceded from the first; indeed, any other arrangement would have seemed scarcely natural, for she occupied a semi-position between companion and attendant, and she would have been to the full as much out of her place among the servants as with her employers.

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Their conversation had been so earnest that their ears had not caught Mrs. Percival's approaching footstep, muffled as it was by the mossy turf. She was already standing beside them, and perhaps had overheard Juliet's melancholy recollections of her childhood; for in stooping to give her a little cordial she had brought for her, she kissed her fervently, and said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in *Me* ye shall have peace."

Juliet drew the loving face again close to her's, and said, "Thank God that I have *you!*"

"You need, and you may have much more, sweet child. Listen," said Mrs. Percival, as she drew a little book from her pocket. "Nay, you need not leave us, Maria, the words are for you too, and they are written by your own Prophet Isaiah: 'A man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' Children, He is all this: I speak what I know. My life is drawing to its peaceful close now, but I can look back on chilling winds, when He was to me a hiding-place; and on days of storm and tempest, when I found in Him a covert. When my soul has thirsted He has given me drink; and I heard His voice when I was weary, saying, 'Come to Me!' I came, and I found rest."

The girls looked on her almost with awe, for her face seemed to reflect a radiance from a bright Presence unseen to them.

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"And He will never leave me," she continued. "He has made good to me His word, 'At evening time it shall be light;' and when I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, He will be with me: He will show me the path of life, and guide me into His presence, where there is fulness of joy."

For a few moments no one spoke. Mrs. Percival's eyes rested with unutterable tenderness on her child.

"My Juliet, you have called to your aid one who cannot hear or help. She was the most highly favoured among women, the one whom all generations shall call blessed; spotless in her virgin purity, meek and lowly in self-estimation, gentle, and submitted to the declared will of God. But she was a woman: her spirit rejoiced *in God her Saviour.* She shared not with her Divine Son any of His Divine attributes. My child, were she standing with us now, and could you pour out every grief into her maternal bosom, she would pity and love you as a woman and a mother; but if with one hand she pressed you to her heart, with the other she would point you upward to where Christ, her exalted Son, sitteth at the right hand of God. 'Help,' she would tell you, 'is laid on One that is mighty;' nor help alone, but tenderest sympathy, for in all our affliction He is afflicted. Juliet, beloved child, you have wronged her by your prayers. Methinks if it be permitted to blessed saints at any time to see and know what takes place on the earth which they have left, there can be no place from which the

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blessed Virgin's eyes are so studiously averted, as from your beautiful Rome, where her loyal heart is every day outraged. I seem to see her warning off with averted face and forbidding hands, those who flock to her shrines. 'It is not in me,' she says: 'It is not in me. God only can give thee an answer of peace.'

"And you, Maria, from whom is it that you are turning? From your own royal Prince, the Son of David. You glory in the God of Israel. You hold to your Shemang, 'Hear, oh Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord!' But He is hidden from you, and you have none to reveal Him. You 'go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but you cannot perceive Him. On the left hand, where He doth work, but you cannot behold Him. He hideth Himself on the right hand, that you cannot see Him.' There is One that reveals Him, and he that hath seen Him hath seen the Father. Maria, this one is your own rejected Messiah, your Saviour King."

She had been led on to speak far beyond her wont, and though her words had been strong, and condemnatory of all their hereditary belief, neither of the girls showed any resentment, so evident was it that she spoke of things to her at least most true and real; and that if she tried to share with them her belief, it was that they might share with her her comfort. From this time Juliet and Maria were less reserved both with her and with each other.

She found that to them both, the Word of God

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was scarcely more than known by name. To Juliet it was the priest's book, which only he could understand. To Maria the Old Testament Scriptures were sealed up in the Hebrew language, which she did not understand. Indeed, the Jewess is not looked upon as forming any part of the congregation in the synagogue. No part of the service is joined in by her, and she can only be present as a spectator in an upper gallery, screened off by a lattice in front, through which she can witness the worship from which she is herself excluded. *Socially* Jews and Jewesses occupy the same relative position to each other as do the sexes among their Gentile neighbours; but *religiously* the distinction is wide and deep. On account of this difference the Jew is taught to repeat in his daily prayers, "Blessed art Thou, oh Lord, King of the universe, who hast not made me a woman." The Jewess, on the other hand, says, "Blessed art Thou, oh Lord, King of the universe, who hast made me according to Thy will." *

It was in Mrs. Percival's heart to introduce her two young charges to the Book which was her own daily comfort and delight. Had Juliet been a very dutiful daughter of mother Church, the case might have been difficult. He must have been a much better Christian than priest, who could hear with indifference her confession that she was listening to the Scriptures as read by a Protestant. Juliet, how-

* Mill's British Jews, p. 49.

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ever, had an instinctive aversion to the Confessional, and her father had been far too indifferent to all religion, to urge her to frequent it. At Easter time she confessed, but Easter was now passed. As to Maria, while the reading was confined to the Old Testament Scriptures, none of her prejudices would be offended; and Mrs. Percival was quite content to limit herself to the scattered rays of Gospel light and warmth, which are to be found in Moses and the Prophets.

She observed the precaution of reading aloud, when the noon-day heat drove them within the thick stone walls of the old villa, and closed windows prevented the risk of her being overheard. Morning by morning the group assembled: the dear old lady with her back to the window, and her chair placed so as to take advantage of one half-quenched sunbeam, which stole in through a broken Venetian, and glancing first on her silver hair, lighted on the open page she held in her right hand, while the left strayed fondly among Juliet's tresses, as her head rested on her grandmother's lap; and Maria! her artist friend, would gladly have been behind the scene! Maria neither spoke nor stirred, but with her hands clasped upon her knees, and leaning slightly forward, she fixed lustrous eyes upon the reader, only now and then, when the sound ceased for a moment, releaving her overstrained attention by a deep sigh. Oh, to hear for the first time the wondrous narrative, of that which no man witnessed,

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how the worlds were framed by the word of God; to hear for the first time the story of Eden, and the tragedy of the flood, and the sweet domestic history of the patriarchal family! it is well and good to be familiar as we are with the letter of Scripture, to have it stored in our memory, and ready on our tongue; but there is a sense in which "the letter killeth," and it needs a special measure of the "Spirit which giveth life," lest the oft told tale should fall powerless on the ear.

Mrs. Percival read almost without note or comment of her own; but any one who had shared her solitude before the reading began, would have known *why* the words which fell from her lips seemed to drop as good seed into prepared soil: she truly wrestled with God for the souls of these children. "Honour thine own Word, O Lord, let it be seen that it is mighty to the pulling down of Satan's strongholds. Ah, Lord! I have compassion on the children, so young, so deceived; ah, Lord! I have the heart to save them: and Thou; what is my love to Thine? Thou hast the will and the power: use the feeble instrument, that the excellency of the power may be seen to be of Thee."

Juliet's long habit of solitary musing, because there had been none to whom she could impart her thoughts, led her to ponder in silence the truth she received. Her first impressions were of the majesty and glory of the God of revelation, as compared with the puerilities which had till now been offered to

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her under the name of religion. No great or noble being had hitherto been presented to that young heart, to engage her reverence or command her worship, and thus she had suffered a double wrong: the tender woman-nature, framed for dependence and adoration, had been left without an object, and the unsatified craving itself, had opened the door to self-gratulation, that she had purer and loftier aspirations than those around her, and could not slake her thirst at the muddy streams which appeared to satisfy them.

Now God stood revealed to her in the majesty of His creating power, in the wisdom of His sustaining Providence; in His absolute and irresponsible authority over the creatures called into being by His own will: she gazed with reverential awe, and bowed her head before Him.

Thus there arose light upon her darkness, but it was at first a dazzling, an intolerable light. For added to the majesty and power and wisdom which captivated her imagination, there shone forth in pure and unintermitted splendour, a spotless holiness from which she shrunk away abashed, as weak eyes seek shelter from the noon-day sun. A new and strange feeling of self-dissatisfaction arose within her. She had seen formerly much to pity in her own life and circumstances, but, till now, little to condemn. Most of all was she humbled in the consciousness that that which chiefly repelled her, was the very perfection of moral beauty exhibited in the Lawgiver and required by Him. She, Juliet! who always supposed herself

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gifted with noble instincts towards the good, the beautiful, the true; she who had yearned so much for one to love her, could it be that *she* listened with a mixture of hopelessness and aversion to an invitation so urgent that it took the form of a command: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul." He the best, and highest, and noblest, stooped to ask her love, and she turned away: was it that she *could* not or that she *would* not give it—but what mattered? A paralyzed will was her guilt and her condemnation, no less than her misery.

Probably she would, notwithstanding the strong self-control she habitually exercised over her feelings, have betrayed this bitter conflict to the watchful eyes of her grandmother, but that Mrs. Percival was suffering from a mild form of malaria fever, brought on by her inexperience of an Italian climate. It was perhaps well for Juliet that the promptings of affection called her away from the solitude she had begun to seek, to exercise, with Maria's help, her powers as a nurse. Experience the girls had little of, and even thoughtful love cannot quite supply its place. As therefore, after two or three days of such simple remedies as the skill of the patient could suggest, unfavourable symptoms rather increased than yielded, Juliet became alarmed, and despatched Bernard to Rome for medical assistance.

Her first thought was of Dr. Selwyn, who as an Englishman, would, she believed, best understand an English constitution. But his experience was small

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in this disease of the Campagna; and not forgetting the danger to Miriam, if she should be seen by any Roman physician of note, Dr. Selwyn went to his friend in the Via Rua, to ask him to accompany him.

"But the lady is a Christian!" said the Signor Medico.

"Aye, that is she; a Christian of a rather different stamp from those around us: but she is no subject of His Holiness; and if the restriction under which you suffer is intended to prevent your tampering with Christian lives, I am much mistaken if it would not be freely removed in this case, even to the extent of warranting you in making a few experiments on the lady's health."

"You jest, Doctor; but in this case I believe you are right, and that my conscience is free: I will go with you. I should much like to see poor Miriam, and to be able to tell her mother of her welfare; for of course no letters can pass between them."

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CHAPTER IX.

THE CONTESSA BARBERINI—COMFORT FOR THE DESOLATE—LUIGI AND GIAN—PRIESTLY INCREDULITY—AN ODIOUS DISCOVERY—PIO NONO'S REFORM.

In a cool recess of a shaded room in her solitary Palazzo, sat the Contessa Barberini di Riaro. The blaze of an Italian sun fell powerless on the walls of massive stone, and the newly sprinkled marble floor reduced the sultry air to a pleasant freshness. A soft plash of falling drops drew attention to a fairy fountain in a recess, arranged so as to throw a delicate spray over maidenhair and liverwort, and to bead them with emerald and diamond; while beside the lady, piled up grapes and blooming peaches invited her to a light and delicate repast. But the Contessa partook not of them, though her hand rested on the luscious basket. She gazed as one who waits sadly for that which never comes. It was not time which had stolen the bloom from her cheek, and the lustre from her eyes, for she was young, and no silver threads mingled with the ebon masses of her glossy hair.

No: it was not time, but grief. A double grief,—

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crushing in its weight for one thus young and solitary. The Contessa was a widow, and childless.

The heaviest blow had fallen first; but while she could clasp to her heart her fatherless babe, her desolation was not complete, and little Beatrice, with her sunny smiles and innocent unconsciousness, led her forth to a new day after her night of grief.

But clouds rose apace: the little lark which had trilled its carol in the dewy morning, fell with heavy wing to earth, and the Contessa was left alone.

Weeks and months passed unheeded, her duties were performed mechanically, political struggles which a few years before during her husband's life-time had stirred the spirit of the Roman lady to its depths, could not rouse her from her apathy, and her friends had begun to regard her as one who lingered with them yet in bodily presence, but whose spirit had gone before her into the valley of the shadow of death.

The first gleam of brightness which kindled on her features had been awakened, some six months previously, by the musical voice of little Zillah Luppino. The Contessa had been one day seated among the broken arches of Rome's grandest ruin, on a stone bench festooned with creepers, and in a recess deep enough to screen her from the observation of the busy groups of tourists, who were uttering remarks more or less intelligent, as they wandered round the mighty shell of the Colosseum. She looked up at the childish voice (for the silver laugh strangely recalled her lost

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Beatrice), and saw two dimpled hands trying to open a passage through the veil of creepers which covered her retreat, and in another moment a little child stood before her as if framed in the leafy screen, so like in size, in form, in feature, to the cherished idol whose image lay ever near her heart, that she neither spoke nor moved, only gazed with unutterable fondness at what she believed to be a vision sent to cheer her from the spirit-world.

Little Zillah, too, fixed for a moment wondering eyes upon her new acquaintance, but with a child's ready discernment she quickly decided that she had found a friend, and springing towards her, she hid herself in the folds of her dress. "Hush: hush!" she said, "the Signora will let me hide, and Naomi will have a long hunt to-day." If the soft pressure of the little nestling form as it clung to her, dispelled the mother's hope that she had seen her lost child in vision, it yet broke the spell of apathy and despair, and folding her arms over the babe, she said fervently, "Oh, that thou wert mine!"

Naomi had not been so unwatchful, nor was the Contessa's retreat so impenetrable as Zillah imagined: it was not long before the little refugee was claimed. To the eager inquiries of the lady, Naomi returned answers that her little charge was the daughter of Signor Medico Luppino, and that she lived in the Via Rua.

"Ah, I shall see the Signora Luppino. I shall visit her: the Signora will admit me?"

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Naomi gave a hesitating assent: guests of such quality might find themselves somewhat astray in the Via Rua. "The Signora Luppino," she said, "was an invalid: she was obliged often to deny herself to her visitors."

"But I shall try, and I may see *you* at least," said the Contessa, turning to the child, and printing another kiss on her cheek, and yet another.

She bent her ear to listen till the prattle of the infantine voice died away in the distance, and then, with the light and energy of a new purpose gleaming in her hitherto listless features, she said to herself, "The child of Jewish parents: then she may yet be mine! To these people nothing is so dear as gold; and they may name their terms, they will scarcely be such as I cannot meet. I must change the name: 'Zillah?' Bah! it has the Hebrew twang. 'Beatrice?' No: that is sacred. Yet what a likeness! Oh, my babe, my babe!"

The visit was soon made, and the rare sight of a princely equipage in the Ghetto drew around it a crowd of little Hebrew *gamins*, whose wild appearance and uncouth manners were not likely to raise in the lady's opinion the race to which they belonged: but she was too much absorbed in her purpose to pay much heed to them.

At her first introduction to Signora Luppino, the Contessa Barberini di Riaro became conscious how fallacious was the hope she had indulged: this she saw at a glance. The social distinction might be

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marked and well defined between the noble lady of the Palazzo and the physician's wife of the Ghetto, but in the gentle and dignified bearing of the invalid, who rose from her couch at her entrance, in the pure and refined accents of her voice, above all, in the untold glance of maternal love at little Zillah, as she courteously thanked her visitor for the kindness she had shown her in the Colosseum, the Contessa felt she had her answer: that to approach her with the sordid offer to barter her child for gold, would have been as impossible as useless.

No: here was no child-mart where a bargain could be struck, but there was a tender woman whose countenance bore many traces of patient suffering, and to whom the childless and lonely Contessa felt irresistibly attracted. Before the interview was ended, her personal sorrow had been poured out into the ear of a ready listener, and the two who were divided by race and religion and social standing, had formed a strong and enduring link of mutual regard.

"You will send your little one to comfort me sometimes, kind Signora?" said the Contessa, as she rose at length to take leave, startled at the chiming of a clock which revealed how long the interview had lasted.

"Ah, yes: it will be an angel's mission!" She hesitated for a moment. "You will remember her race, our faith?"

"Sacredly, I promise you."

Such had been the commencement of visits to the

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Contessa which had been of almost daily occurrence, till the necessity of concealment as to Miriam's retreat had made it prudent to keep within safe limits the little chatterer, who was necessarily entrusted with the secret. This, however, could not be assigned as the reason, and on the day on which we have introduced the Contessa to the reader, the gloom had deepened on her countenance, as she sat among her fruits and flowers, because she feared the solace she had found in the child's society was about to be withdrawn: she had been again refused to her, and, as she imagined, for some unexplained reason rather than the one given.

The refusal was however couched in Deborah's pleasant and friendly language, and spoke of her own regret and the privation to Zillah, especially now that the returning heat of summer made the air of the Ghetto increasingly oppressive.

The Contessa was revolving the possibility of making a little *villegiatura* for herself, and inducing Zillah's parents to entrust the child to her, and let her have the advantage of the fresh and bracing air of the Alban hills, when her meditations were cut short by the entrance of her cousin, Luigi di Sforza.

His manner, as he seated himself near her, betrayed agitation. He waited till the servant had closed the door and he had heard his retreating footsteps, he then said hurriedly,—

"Have you heard that Gian is in Rome?"

"Gian! no: you have not seen him?"

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"I shall do so to-night. See: this was given me by Beppo."

He handed to her a scrap on which the well-known hand had traced the words, "Meet me at midnight at the Baths of Caracalla."

"Did Beppo know the contents?"

"No: for it came to me sealed. But in this case at least Beppo could be trusted: infidelity would cost him dear."

For the benefit of stay-at-home Islanders, to whom the name "Beppo" conveys nothing, we must be allowed a short digression. Mr. Story shall tell them of Beppo as he was ten years ago, and had been for many years at the time of which our narrative treats. Directly above the Piazza di Spagna, the quarter in Rome most frequented by the English, rise the double towers of the Trinità de' Monti: they are reached by an ascent of more than one hundred and thirty-five steps. Their steepness is veiled and their monotony broken, by various landings and dividing walls. The lower steps and platforms are the resort of the painters' models in the intervals of their engagements,* but as one ascends to the last platform before reaching the upper piazza in front of the Trinità de' Monti, a curious squat figure with two withered and crumpled legs, spread out at right angles, and clothed in long blue stockings, comes shuffling along on his

* This has been of late years prohibited, with two or three favoured exceptions.

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knees and hands, which are protected by clogs. As it approaches, it turns suddenly up from its quadrupedal position, takes off its hat, shows a broad stout legless *torso*, with a vigorous chest and a ruddy face, as of a person who has come half way up from below the steps through a trap door, and, with a smile whose breadth is equalled only by the cunning which lurks round the corners of the eyes, says in the blandest and most patronising tones, "*Buon giorno, Signore! Oggi fa bel tempo*," or "*fa cattivo tempo*,"* as the case may be. This is Beppo, King of the Beggars, and Baron of the Scala di Spagna. Who has so good a right to his platform as he? since he hires it of the Government at a small rent per annum; and woe to any member of his profession who dares to invade his premises. Beppo has a history: he was undoubtedly of a good family in the provinces, and came to Rome while yet young, to seek his fortunes. His crippled condition cut him off from any active employment, and after changing his name, he adopted the profession of a mendicant, as being the most lucrative and requiring the least exertion. That he has not mistaken his vocation has been proved by the result, for whereas his withered legs and his bland smiles were his whole stock-in-trade at starting, he has in a quarter of a century amassed a very respectable little fortune; has a wife and several children,

* Good day, Signor! what beautiful weather! or, what bad weather.

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and when his daughter married, he could afford to give her a by no means despicable dowry.

Such was Beppo, and as he had lived and begged through the stormy times of 1848 and the succeeding years, and had kept a shrewd and observant eye on public events, no one, to use a popular expression, knew better "which way the wind blew;" no one could keep a secret better than Beppo, or more dexterously parry troublesome inquiries if it could be proved to his satisfaction that silence coincided with his interests. That it did so in the present instance he could have no reasonable doubt, for the young priest, Luigi di Sforza was an acknowledged favourite with the Holy Father, and his inspiring genius, Antonelli. What though Gian was an exiled rebel, and had only dared to show himself on the Scala di Spagna, disguised as one of the *confraternita* of beggars, Gian's business was with Father Luigi; this in Beppo's eyes gave security to his person, and sacredness to his missive. A message couched in idiomatic terms, and conveyed by Beppo's valet (a small lad mounted upon crutches, whether for need or for show, who brought daily his master's donkey to fetch him back from the Scala), had the effect of bringing Father Luigi to his platform, and giving him the opportunity of disburdening himself of his secret.

He saw that he had not miscalculated: years of absence, opposite political opinions, had not taught Luigi to hear with indifference the name of Gian. He handsomely rewarded Beppo's fidelity to his

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trust, but was disappointed to find that he could tell him nothing more than that among the occupants of a platform lower than his own, he had noticed one whose abstracted manner seemed ill to suit with his garb and profession as a mendicant, that the object of his observation had soon made an excuse to present himself to the King of the Beggars, and had whispered in his ear as he slipped the paper into his hand, "For Father Luigi di Sforza, from Gian Ferretti."

"The Padre now knows all, and Beppo is his humble servant," he concluded.

He hastened down the steps, not daring to open the paper till he was alone, but scanning every beggar whom he passed, offering even many an unasked baiocco, to bring the recipients under observation.

The seething heat, and desire for privacy led him to seek his own apartments, and there he drew the paper from his bosom, and learned that he was once more breathing the same air with the friend who had been to him as his own soul, and that within a few hours he should see him.

What if it were possible to obtain pardon for him! Luigi had that very evening an appointment at the Vatican; the mind of Pio Nono was at this time absorbed with his design of establishing the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception as an article of faith, the zeal of Luigi di Sforza in this question had been a valuable auxiliary, it had even procured him favour with Cardinal Antonelli, the real ruler of Rome; would, then, the pardon of his friend be a boon too

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great to ask for so many services, and such faithful attachment as Luigi had ever shown to the Holy Father and his cause?

The more he revolved the idea in his mind the more possible and hopeful did it appear, and it was less to seek advice than to obtain a confirmation of his plan, that he sought his cousin, the Contessa Barberini di Riaro, in her Palazzo, and unfolded it to her sympathizing ear, for she too had loved and lamented the exiled Gian.

To understand the difficulties which surrounded the generous attempt of Luigi di Sforza, we must retrace for a few years his own history, and that of Gian Ferretti.

Luigi had been destined by his parents from very early childhood to the office of the priesthood. This is a practice which often obtains in the Roman States, where the tonsure and clerical robe are almost the sole passport to advancement or remunerative employment, all offices under the government of a Priest-King being filled by priests. The heads of noble houses, in making this selection for their sons, are also influenced by the consideration that the celibacy to which such sons are condemned, will protect the family property from a too minute subdivision, the portion of the celibate son returning at his death to his family. Many are the instances in which young men are thus thrust into the priesthood who have no vocation, either natural or spiritual, for such a life.

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Happily for Luigi this was not the case with himself: at a very early age he was separated from his family, and committed to the care of a maternal uncle, a Roman parish Priest, devoted to the duties of his calling; by whom he was easily and pleasantly inured to all the employments and habits peculiar to clerical life. Rome has its attractions for every age, and the boys brought up in the houses of priests, especially if relatives, find occupations suited to their tastes and capacities; arrayed in tunic and vest, they carry candles and censers, they ring bells in the towers, they perambulate the church collecting alms from the faithful in large purses, they swell processions, and witness imposing ceremonies. Nor is their daily life so monotonous, or devoid of excitement as we might imagine; they find congenial companions in the boys who meet in the sacristy, the hospitality, too, exercised in the canonical houses is unbounded, rich and well served repasts, of which the children are partakers, are always ready for any number of friends who may favour the priest with their company; thus the neophytes are taught to enjoy and value good living. The range of conversation at such repasts varies widely, from a keen appreciation of the merits of the dishes, to laudation of the ceremonies in which all have taken part, till the mind of the children becomes deeply imbued with reverence for benedictions and miracles, indeed all that priestly ordination enables the happy possessor to perform.

In the evening card tables are set out, and on days

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of festival especially, the evenings are spent in the hospitable reception of friends by the priests, while bottles of exquisite wines encourage the reverend men and their guests in lively and joyous discourse. It is not surprising that all this is very inviting to the boys,—the easy, comfortable life of the priests, and their own habitual routine of duty, render the prospect of a clerical life not only attractive, but as it were a second nature to them.

Luigi's uncle was, as we have said, earnest in his devotion to the duties of his office, he was also sincerely attached to his nephew, and believed that to render attractive to him his future destiny, was a good and meritorious work.

Thus passed his boyish days; but with advancing years young Luigi gave signs of a subtle intellect and mental ability likely to leave the attainments of his good uncle in the rear. He was removed from his care, and placed under Jesuit direction in the Collegio Romano. He entered with keen relish into the philosophical and theological studies appointed for him, and became more than ever enamoured both of his profession and of the ecclesiastical system by which it was upheld. It is true that as he learned to dwell more in the region of abstract thought, the pageantry of the ceremonial in which he took part, lost something of its fascination for him; but on confessing this to his director, he was met with the comfortable assurance that the Church deals in all things as a wise mother,—that for babes in wisdom

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and knowledge she has toys and baubles, while for the maturer intellect she has deep and holy mysteries: the sign for the one, the thing signified for the other. To the mummery and irreverence which mingle so largely with Romish services, Luigi endeavoured to shut his eyes and ears, as we willingly ignore a blemish on a countenance we love.

It was at this time that Luigi made the acquaintance of a young fellow-student, Gian Ferretti, related, though somewhrt distantly, to the present Pope, then Cardinal Mastai Ferretti. Unlike Luigi, Gian had been brought up in and for general society, and had been glad enough to leave his eternal interests in the hands of the priests ("meditative drones," he said, "they were, the best of them"), while he abandoned himself to the pleasures which Italian society offers to the young and ardent. But the cup was rudely dashed from his hand. He had loved as men love but once, and had attributed to the object of his passion the constancy which belonged to his own affection. He found himself deceived, and maddened by the sight of the happiness of his rival, he determined to forswear human ties for ever. Before he had given himself time to reflect, he shut, as he hoped, the great gates of the cloister between himself and his trouble.

Cardinal Mastai took his young relative by the hand, for he felt drawn to him by the fact that there had been circumstances in his own early career which closely corresponded with those of Gian. He, too, in

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his youth, had been admired and courted by society; and, though subject to epileptic fits, his personal attractions and powers as a musician and a poet, had won for him the admiration of his young countrywomen, and emboldened him to aspire to the hand of Elena, daughter of Prince Albani; and he, too, had known the cruel reverse of finding himself supplanted in the affections which had been pledged to him, and, like Gian, had fled for refuge from grief and disappointment, to a sacerdotal life.

At the time when Gian shut himself and his griefs up in the Collegio Romano, Mastai had received his Cardinal's hat and the Bishopric of Imola from the hands of Gregory XVI. He was therefore in a position to advance his young kinsman's interests, and he could quote his own example as proof that the Church has balm for the wounds which a cruel world has given.

Did Gian find it so? He turned to his new vocation eagerly, as to a forlorn hope; but the solitude he had made around him was not peace, and the ceaseless round of ceremonies in which he was engaged, while they distracted his attention, left the corroding grief untouched, which lay at his heart.

Luigi's attention had not been directed to Gian, till the day, for himself so memorable, when he first celebrated High Mass. At such times the celebrant becomes the subject of universal honour, and it is usual for him to sit after the service in an arm-chair before the altar, with his open hands resting on the

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arms of his seat, it being considered by the Church a meritorious act for every man, woman, and child of the congregation to kiss with reverence the palms of the new priest. It was a proud moment for Luigi. From his soul he believed in his sacerdotal powers, and that he had, with a few solemn words, changed the bread and wine into the very flesh, blood, soul, and divinity of his Lord. With such powers, what would be impossible to him? From his heart he thanked God that he was a son of the Church, and vowed to do her loyal service.

As thus he sat in happy reverie, and receiving with complacency the honour due, as he said, not to himself, but to his office, his eye rested on the expressive features of young Gian Ferretti, who advanced in his turn and bowed reverently to kiss his open palm. He was clothed in the habit of the College, but the hopelessness depicted on his face contrasted so strongly with the inward satisfaction experienced by himself, that Luigi bent over him to whisper, "The Holy Mother be gracious to thee, brother."

The tones of pity and sympathy fell as balm on the lonely-hearted Gian, and on that night two figures might have been noticed pacing in slow and measured tread the spacious quadrangle of the Collegio Romano, now raising earnest faces to the silver moon, now bending their heads in whispered conversation. It was Luigi and Gian.

This friendship thus begun linked together two beings who were almost contrasts both in natural

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disposition and habits of thought. But the gain was not all on one side. Luigi, whose really affectionate heart had as yet known no stronger love than that which bound him to his aged uncle, opened with enthusiasm to the joys of an ardent friendship; and if at times his theological studies were pursued less closely than before, his conscience was easily satisfied with the assurance that he alone had saved his friend from the apathy of despair, and had preserved to Holy Mother Church one who might yet do her faithful and important service.

Gian brought his friend under the notice of Cardinal Mastai, who was keen-sighted enough to discern in Luigi the fine qualities of heart and intellect, which, if combined with an enslaved judgment, are invaluable in a propagandist. He succeeded in attaching both the young men to his person.

Gian made sincere efforts to attain the unruffled satisfaction in his vocation which he saw and envied in his friend; but from time to time most inconvenient doubts would intrude themselves as to the power and validity of the functions he exercised, after receiving his ordination as priest. No sooner had the proud "*Ego te absolve*" crossed his lips, than he became tormented with the fear that he had deluded his penitents with false hopes. And this was not his worst scruple. Romish miracles still more hopelessly perplexed his conscience. Must he believe himself, must he call upon others to believe that images winked, and pictures shed tears, and many other

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lying wonders, which outraged alike his reason and common sense?

A secret fear that the confession of his doubts to Luigi might interfere with their common friendship, prevented him from seeking counsel from him; but he acted as he hoped wisely, in consulting priests of advanced age and high reputation for piety. It was then that he was startled to find how widespread, in the very city of the Pope, is incredulity, among those whose lives are spent in teaching that which *they do not believe.*

He told them of his ceaseless struggle with doubts; he entreated them to confirm his faith, to teach him how to answer them, to be his fathers and guides, to enlighten him with their knowledge, so superior to his own. And what was their answer? They bestowed upon him a contemptuous compassion. "How can a young man," said they, "possessing your power of discernment, be still so simple? Do you really believe there is anything in these absurdities?."

Repulsed, thrown back upon himself, his doubts assumed only a graver and more tormenting form. How could he dissociate the dogmas of his Church from the absurdities with which they were so closely incorporated? Was all false together? Was religion itself an invention of the priests—a mercantile speculation—a mode of government? In the anguish of his spirit, and scarce daring to utter that which seemed to him so blasphemous, he knelt before one whose reverend age and high standing in the Church

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led him to hope both for compassion and guidance. "Father," he said, with trembling accents, "I have even dared to doubt whether our holy religion is true."

The aged lip curled in scorn, as he replied in these remarkable words: "Oh, fool! do you still find anything to believe in it?"

Inexpressibly shocked, Gian turned away, thankful that he could answer it to his own conscience that he had not as yet made shipwreck of faith. But his position was perilous. One false doctrine after another had been tried by the standard of reason and conscience, found wanting, and rejected. He was casting his idols to the moles and to the bats, but he had nothing to replace them, and his soul felt empty and impoverished.

One rude shock he had yet to sustain. Hitherto he had held firmly to the doctrine of transubstantiation,—held it with a loving credence, marvelling at the grace with which the God-man presents Himself in His entire divinity and humanity to mortal sight, gives Himself again and again to be eaten of men. His office as priest, the power which he firmly believed he exercised of calling down the Divine essence to tabernacle in the consecrated host, filled him with admiration, awe, and wonder.

A casual occurrence rent the veil which had covered the deformity of this cherished idol. It is perhaps not generally known that Romish belief invests the consecrated wafer with its awful sacredness as the

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shrine of the body, soul, and divinity of the second Person of the Godhead, *only for a limited time;* until, that is, its particles begin to yield to the universal physical law, and fall into dissolution. Then God is supposed to withdraw Himself, as from a habitation unworthy of Him. The law of the Church distinctly commands each parish priest to change the wafers contained in the *pisside*, or little vase enclosed in the shrine which holds them, before such a change can have taken place. The time prescribed is within fifteen days in summer, and a month in winter.

It was in the month of May, 1846, at one of the numerous services which take place in that month to the honour of the Virgin, that Gian was performing the first Mass. He went into the sacristy and put on the sacred vestments, and then went to say Mass at the altar, where many communicants already knelt. After the preliminary ceremonies he turned towards the kneeling penitents, and then opened the shrine to take out the *pisside* containing the wafers, which had been consecrated on a former occasion, and which were therefore no longer flour, according to Romish doctrine, but God in person.

On approaching the circle to administer the communion, he opened the *pisside*, and to his horror beheld nothing but corruption: the Host was corrupted, and the people had been adoring this as God!

Filled with disgust and horror he closed the *pisside*, and excused himself to the people as he best could, by saying the wafers were exhausted, and that the

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penitents should communicate when the next celebrant had consecrated fresh ones; for it is only during Mass the priest consecrates. He quitted the Church hastily, and ran full of angry confusion to describe this horrid occurrence to the parish priest, by whose carelessness in omitting to change the wafers it had happened. The old man saw at once that he was in Gian's power, for a complaint from him to his superiors, would bring him into deep disgrace. As a man of advanced years, he was well versed in the cunning and sophistry of one whose life has been spent in maintaining falsehood, and he sought to mystify the young priest by the assurance "that he was under a mistake,—that the enemy had gained power over him and deluded his eyes, so that he had seen what had no existence; in short, the wafers were fresh, and he had been the subject of a diabolical illusion;" a pitiful attempt, which only served to destroy in Gian's mind every vestige of respect for him, while the circumstance itself freed him at once and for ever from the idea that the words of a man could bring the Divinity into a form subjecting Him to such unheard of degradation, or that the blessed doctrine of the Lord's presence in the Sacrament is capable of such a materialistic interpretation.

But Gian's mind was now to be withdrawn from the questions of faith, which cost him such bitter inward conflict, by public events of absorbing interest, which followed in quick succession.

Gregory XVI. died, and the conclave of Cardinals

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proceeded to the election of a new Pope. Unusual precipitation marked their movements, no time was given to organize an opposition, the foreign Cardinals were not even waited for: Cardinal Mastai was elected. To Luigi and Gian this was common cause for rejoicing, for both were personally attached to the new Pontiff. Born in 1792, he was still in vigorous manhood when he ascended the Papal throne, June 16, 1846. As we write the date we are reminded that the present year, 1871, completes the twenty-fifth of his reign, and that he, therefore, belies the proverb, *Non videbis annos Petri*, no Pope since St. Peter having occupied the Pontificial throne for twenty-five years, till Pio Nono himself. We are bound to add that a general belief is entertained that should any Pope reign for the same number of years as the Apostle is said to have presided over the Church, Rome will be immediately destroyed. To our thinking events do not just now look that way, the present emancipation of Rome from the rule of the Priest-King, must tend rather to her *preservation* than to her *destruction*.

But to return to the summer of 1846. Pio Nono had personal gifts and attractions which might have won him favour with his people; to a peculiarly fine and melodious voice, he added the charm of impassioned eloquence as a preacher; but it was not to these, nor to his handsome person that we must attribute the burst of enthusiasm which attended the opening of his reign.

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His election was popular, for he had a good name as a Cardinal: liberal principles and patriotic ideas were attributed to him. The acts of clemency, however, with which he commenced his reign, and the liberal policy he initiated, far surpassed any expectations that had been raised. The down-trodden Romans over-awed by Austria and the strictness of Gregorian despotism, looked on in joy and wonder, upon the reformation of laws, the release of political prisoners, the recall of those who had been exiled for political offences, and, marvel of marvels! the withdrawal in a great measure of power from the priests! The hopes of Italy rose to an extravagant height.

Words fail to convey an idea of the affection lavished on the Pope at this time by a grateful people; cries, acclamations, songs of joy, tears, every possible demonstration of unbounded happiness and affection greeted his appearance in public. His portrait was worn by young and old with delight, on handkerchiefs, brooches, and other articles of dress. No house, whether rich or poor, was without his picture. In all assemblies, whether of learned or ignorant persons, the mention of his name raised an echo of joy. People trusted in his sincerity as a man sent of God, the liberator of Italy.

Meanwhile the work of reform went on. We have already seen in an earlier part of our narrative, that the despised Jews of the Ghetto came in for their share of the general benefit, and the walls of

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their prison were levelled, never again to be raised. The press was almost free, articles in favour of liberty were published by the patriots, and other Italian States felt the impulse given in the States of the Church. The devout Papists taken by surprise, renounced the idea of resisting progress, and followed the steps of a reforming Pope. The Cardinals and Prelates, well aware of all that was going on, copied their Chief in professions of liberalism.

Austria, as might have been expected, looked with no favourable eye on the unwonted spectacle of liberal Italy headed by a liberal Pope; she strengthened her army, reinforced the garrison of Ferrara, and an invasion of Roman territory was expected. It may be, that by this time, Pio Nono began to fear that he had called up a spirit in the Italian people which was getting beyond his control, but as yet he gave no signs of hesitation. The threatened invasion was to be bravely and unanimously resisted, and the banner of the civic guard, organized to aid the defence, was blessed by the Holy Father. It only remained to legalize an Italian Constitution, so many of the essentials of which were already permitted and acted upon.

It could hardly fail that public events should awaken in Luigi and Gian sentiments as diverse as their characters and habits of thought. To Luigi, with his abstract notion that as matter is subordinate to spirit, so should all things material be to all things spiritual—and all temporal power and rule, to that

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exercised by Christ's Vicegerent on earth,—any movement seemed fraught with danger, by which the Holy Father should relax his absolute rule over the bodies and souls of his subjects, or admit, in a form however modified, the idea of secular government. To Gian, on the contrary, reform in the Church if he was to remain longer in the priesthood had become a necessity; and his pride and delight knew no bounds in the noble kinsman who had begun his reign as a reformer. True, the reforms had as yet been rather political than ecclesiastical, but he believed that the Pope would be obliged to proceed to the revision and entire renovation of the dogmas of the Church: and his joy was heartfelt, that under the new order of things he should be free in thought and speech, and yet a priest, no longer compelled to teach or proclaim as true, what he knew to be false.

An accurate observer could not long have failed, however, to notice, that the reserved Luigi, with his reluctant acquiescence in the measures of his new master, was more acceptable to him, than his fervent admirer and kinsman, Gian Ferretti.

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CHAPTER X.

DISAFFECTION IN ROME—IMPERIOUS DEMANDS—CONCESSIONS WON AND RETRACTED—THE FLIGHT OF THE HOLY FATHER —FRENCH OCCUPATION OF ROME—ANTONELLI.

Two years and five months more passed over the head of the new Pope: had he verified the hopes of his people; was he still the popular idol; had the spirit of reform, guided but not repressed by the supreme Ruler in Church and State, wrought, in the dominions of the Holy Father, that happy change so deeply needed, so earnestly desired? Let our readers judge.

On the evening of the 16th of November, 1848, Rome presented an imposing spectacle. The national guards in full costume but unarmed, the carabineers and the regular troops, joined by a body of citizens amounting to 30,000 proceeded to the Quirinal surrounded by a crowd of persons, whose surging masses reminded the spectator of the waves of the sea. No cries, no clamours, no disturbance of any kind took place during the march. At length they reached the Quirinal, to a man moved by the same thought

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and purpose,—to demand a *secular ministry* and *constituent assembly.*

But what change had come over the dreams of Pio Nono: were not these the very blessings he promised two years before, and the promise of which made his name in Rome a household word for love and admiration? This was the change,—he begun his reign as a Prince, with enlightened views as to the freedom which makes a nation great and brave and respected, and for a while the incense of popular applause kept him steadfast to a liberal policy; but Pius had fallen upon difficult times, and a stronger hand than his was wanted to keep within due bounds the spirit he had raised. It needed but a slight show of timorous self-distrust as to the effect of his liberal policy, to bring back to his side evil counsellors who had waited their time, till the reaction should set in, which is sure, sooner or later, to assail a vacillating mind. Jesuits or semi-Jesuits gained access to him, and he became timid and lukewarm. He removed patriots from posts of honour. He began to meditate on what he owed to his office, and on the conflicting duties of patriot and Pope. What had been his oath on ascending the chair of St. Peter? Having sworn solemnly on the Gospels, calling to witness the most High God, His angels, saints, and the whole celestial court, he had proceeded to invoke on his own head all the thunders of Divine wrath, denouncing eternal perdition on his soul, in the fulfilment of the justice of the Lord, if he should violate this oath, an oath

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which bound him irrevocably before God and men, to preserve for his successors the chair of St. Peter, to transmit the dominion of the Papacy, spiritual and temporal, unimpaired, nay more, consolidated, to them. The partizans of the old system saw the struggle in his breast, and they turned it to account, by what means can never be known, but certain it is that he allowed himself to be diverted from a policy, the mere anticipation of which had gained for him a throne in the hearts of his people, by those who knew too well how to work upon his fears, and to threaten him with the anger of God and eternal perdition, in case he did not contradict his former professions.

We are now prepared to understand the imposing demonstration of a disappointed people on the evening of the 16th of November. On the previous day public disaffection had shown itself in the assassination of Rossi, the unpopular and despotic Minister of State, but the person of the Pope had not as yet once been threatened.

The moving mass, as we have said, reached the Quirinal where the Pope and his Court were assembled. Now for the first time Gian and Luigi found themselves openly ranged on opposite sides. They had yet thoughts in common: Luigi heartily desired to see an amicable termination of the struggle; and in the breast of Gian there yet lingered personal attachment to the Prince and kinsman, who in the first days of his reign had won his ardent homage; but

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their leading principles were diametrically opposed. In the opinion of Luigi the Holy Father was irrevocably bound by his oath, and any abdication and delegation of his temporal power was an act of treason in God's vicegerent. Gian, on the other hand, who had mixed much with the patriots, and felt the popular pulse, was well assured of the justice of their requirements, and believed that nothing was needed to establish the Holy Father on his throne, and to make Rome once more great and happy, but that he should be faithful to the engagements into which he had entered with his people.

The Swiss guarded the palace, but their threatening aspect did not intimidate the populace, who held firm to their purpose of obtaining a hearing from the Sovereign. From the immense but orderly assemblage, five deputies were chosen to represent the opinions of their companions,—Gian was among them. The Pope refused to give the deputies an audience, and then as with one voice arose a universal cry of "Give us a secular ministry and a constituent assembly." On a second demand they were however admitted to the presence of Pius, who stood with his Court ready to receive them.

A dark frown gathered on his brow as his glance recognized in one of the five, his renegate kinsman, but it was scarcely perceived by Gian, whose spirit was stirred to its depths by the half-averted half-imploring countenance of his friend Luigi, who stood behind the Holy Father, and at no great distance

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from his person. But the die was cast, and the claims of friendship could not change, or cause him to forget the inwrought convictions of his mind.

A scene of urgent and impassioned pleading followed. Undaunted by the positive refusal of the Pope to grant the request of his people, the deputies urged the benefits which must accrue to himself and the nation from the measure, and implored him to condescend to their desire.

Fresh cries from without exasperated him: "What more," he said, "can this people expect at my hands; do they require me to despoil myself of dignity? to betray myself and the world by making base concessions, weakening the power God has committed to His vicegerent, belying the Divine rights with which my office invests me? If false to my oath and my duties, what shall be said of me in the present and future ages? shall not my name be execrated as the first violater of that tremendous oath by which the Pope binds himself before God, to transmit his authority undiminished? Must I forget all that is sacred and my own conscience?"

The deputies on the other hand, argued "that the Pontificial power must be strengthened by the concession of reforms demanded by the times, that he would bind the hearts of his subjects to him, who would ever regard him as a benignant and clement Sovereign; and surely no better means could be devised of establishing the foundations of the Holy See in the hearts of the people, than surrounding

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her with free institutions, and removing abuses degrading to the real dignity of the Papacy, and, as the regenerator of his country, his name would be reverenced and blessed by present and future ages."

No arguments were of any avail, the presence of his bad counsellors confirmed the resolution of Pius, who demanded, "How the ungrateful people dared approach their Sovereign and Pontiff with signs of violence, which could not intimidate him or turn him aside from his duties?"

Meantime the multitude lost patience, and began to use threatening language, while the cries were terrific. The deputies pressed the Pontiff for a favourable reply to quiet the populace, already fearfully excited, lest the threatening aspect now assumed, should end in some deed of violence. But Pius was slow to give any sign of consent. They implored him to save the country and himself by an act of benignity. Fresh confusion prevailed in the Piazza, but the higher the excitement rose without, the more resolute did he become, and the deputies had at length no answer to take back but this, "No: no! I will never yield."

The yells of the disappointed people became appalling; and then the Pope, instigated by Antonelli, commanded the Swiss to fire on the unarmed multitude. Many were wounded, and a shout of scorn and execration rose in reply to the discharge.

It was but for a few moments, for suddenly, as if with the touch of an enchanter's wand the scene

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shifted, the square was emptied, all had vanished, only the dead and wounded lay where they had fallen; but an ominous whisper ran among the surrounding crowd, that the petitioners had only retired to arm themselves, and to return. The crowd which had not before joined the tumult, determined to follow the example of their friends.

Scarcely had the Pope and his courtiers time to congratulate themselves on the value of a decisive measure, and its effect in dispersing the tumultuous crowd, when their ears were caught by the sound of a throng of advancing footsteps, rapid though orderly and combined. No hesitation or clamour attended the movement; they were not now peaceful petitioners, but an armed multitude, who knew how to curb themselves in order to attain their object. They pressed forward to receive the attack of the Swiss guards, who seeing this closed the palace gates, while the troops and the people surrounded the Quirinal.

Stout hearts might fail at the attitude, now so formidably threatening, assumed by the multitude, and the hearts of cardinals are not stout: are they not peaceful priests? They sent messenger after messenger to the Trasteverens, entreating them to come to their aid and disperse the crowd, but the Trasteverens showed no zeal in the matter, and preferred to leave the Holy Father to settle his own affairs.

One patriot's heart bled at the prospect of a hand-

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to-hand struggle in the narrow streets of a crowded city; nor did he forget his friend within the Quirinal, and his probable fate should the exasperated multitude gain entrance to the palace. As he stood prepared for action, Gian's heart was rising in fervent supplication to God to calm the spirits of all who surrounded him. That the people could not much longer be held back from an assault, was proved by an incident that happened at this critical juncture. A prelate, holding office in the household, approached a window: perhaps urged by a desire to use some means to avert the storm, perhaps sent by superior authority to see and judge the extent of the danger, perhaps merely from curiosity, but whatever his motive, no sooner had he showed himself than a ball from the piazza struck him on the forehead, and buried for ever all knowledge of his motives in his sudden death.

"Luigi, my friend," thought Gian, "God avert from thee such a fate!"

At length, despairing of help from without, Pius, as night drew on, began to quail. Dread for his own person, for his friends, and the Papal dignity exposed to risk, wrested from him that which he had denied to the claims of his people, and the sacredness of former promises. It was proclaimed that the Holy Father would accede to their demands, and grant the secular ministry.

The happy news spread with the speed of light among the generous and confiding crowd, which,

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laying aside all anger and violent purpose, quietly dispersed, and peace was once more restored to the city.

The crowd dispersed, but one foot-passenger paced for hours the street, along one whole side of which the Palace of the Quirinal extends. Gian Ferretti had for the first time that day stood confessed before his friend as making common cause with the patriots. Must he on that account forfeit his friendship? It was a conclusion he found it hard to face. They might surely remain brothers in heart: agreed on all points save this one.

Therefore he mounted his solitary guard: but Luigi came not; probably in a fervour of loyalty he refused to quit his Sovereign till a longer interval of quiet should have shown that the popular rising had subsided: neither on that night nor in the week that followed did the Patriot and the Ultramontane cross each other's paths, though on the side of the former at least, an interview was earnestly desired. Luigi's friendship had been much to him, and the fear that he must lose it tempered the joy he might have felt in the triumph of the Liberal party. "Besides," as he said to himself day by day, "was the triumph a secure one?" Concessions extorted by fear are easily retracted. The idea that the Pope would seek refuge in flight, and throw himself on Catholic Europe for protection, was ever present to his mind. He sought, but in vain, to communicate his anxiety to the *Circolo Populari*, as the Liberal

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assemblies were called, which at this time met daily in Rome and publicly discussed the politics of the day. His suspicions were confirmed by observing that the Pope no longer consulted with the Liberal Ministers of State, but with strangers holding unconstitutional principles, and that among the ambassadors, those of France, Spain, and Bavaria had ready access to him, while the Tuscan and Piedmontese Ministers were discountenanced. How was this consistent with the pledge given to his people a few days earlier, on the faith of which they had renounced all hostile demonstration?

That Gian's presentiments were right is a matter of history, and but that the details of public events fade quickly from the mind, and that our readers are probably for the most part younger than the era of which we write, we should hardly need to recall the romance of the Holy Father's escape from the Quirinal on the 24th of November, 1848, just eight days after the popular rising.

On the afternoon of the 24th of November, the Duc d' Harcourt had arrived at the Quirinal in his coach as Ambassador of France, and craved an audience of the Sovereign. That he knew of the impending flight, that he hoped and believed that it would be to Civita Vecchia, and that the Holy Father would throw himself into the arms of France, and in case of violence go on board one of the French ships, is certain; but it is matter of dispute whether, on leaving the Quirinal, the Pope was or was not,

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cognizant of a counter-plot made for him by Cardinal Antonelli and Count Spaur, the Bavarian Minister, in virtue of which he was to make the best of his way to the Neapolitan dominions, and take refuge with King Bomba, who like himself had first granted and then reversed a Constitutional Government. Be that as it may, the Duc d' Harcourt was admitted, and the guards wondered that he stayed so long; but they knew not that he sat reading the newspaper in the Papal study, to cover, under the excuse of the audience, the Pope's retreat, who meanwhile had retired to his bedroom to change his dress. Here his major-domo Fillipani had laid out the black cassock and dress of an ordinary priest. The Pontiff came forth in the simple garb of earlier days, and returned to his study. The Duc d' Harcourt threw himself on his kness, exclaiming, "Go forth, Holy Father: Divine wisdom inspired this counsel, Divine power will lead it to a happy end."

By secret passages and narrow staircases Pius IX. and his trusty servant passed unseen to a little door, used only occasionally for the Swiss guards, and by which they were to leave the palace. They reached it, and bethought them that the key had been forgotten. Fillipani hastened back to the Papal apartment to fetch it, and returning unquestioned to the wicket, found the Pope on his knees, and quite absorbed in prayer. The wards were rusty, and the key turned with difficulty, but the door was opened at last, and they quickly entered a poor hackney

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coach that was waiting for them outside. Here again they ran risk of being discovered, through the thoughtless adherence to old etiquette of another servant who stood by the coach, and who, having let down the steps, knelt as usual before he shut the door.

The Holy Father was well disguised in a low crowned round hat, a dark great coat over his priest's capoch, and a brown woollen neckcloth. Fillipani had on his usual loose cloak, but under it he carried the three-cornered hat of the Pope, a bundle of the most private and secret papers, the Papal seals, the breviary, the cross-embroidered slippers, a small quantity of linen, and a little box full of gold medals stamped with the likeness of His Holiness. From the inside of the carriage he directed the coachman to follow many winding and diverging streets, in the hope of misleading the spies, who were known to swarm at every corner.

At length in the deserted quarter beyond the Colosseum, they found the Bavarian Minister waiting in his own private carriage. The Sovereign pressed the hand of his faithful Fillipani, and entered the carriage. Here, as we said, accounts differ: according to some, the Pope believed himself to be taking the way to Civita Vecchia, in pursuance of an agreement with the Duc d' Harcourt, and when he found his mistake a lively altercation ensued, to which the postillion listened to such purpose that it was thought worth while to purchase his silence at a cost of ten

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scudi; according to others, the Pope voluntarily confided himself to Count Spaur, and they drove on together silently through the old gate of Rome, where the Count showed his passport as the Bavarian Minister, going to Naples on affairs of State. Near La Riccia the fugitives found Countess Spaur (who had arranged the whole plan of the escape) waiting with a coach and six horses, in which they pursued their journey to Gaeta, reaching the Neapolitan frontier between five and six in the morning.

To return to the Quirinal. To save appearances, all went on as if the Pope had been present. When the Duc d' Harcourt left the Palace (which he did when he thought that His Holiness must be far beyond the walls of Rome; and, taking post horses, followed him, as he believed, with all speed to Civita Vecchia), a prelate entered with a large bundle of ecclesiastical papers, on which he had, as he said, to confer with the Pope; afterwards his chamberlain went in, as if to read to him his breviary, and the office of the day. The rooms were lighted up, and the supper taken in as usual. (It may not be known to all our readers, that as a matter of etiquette, the Holy Father must take his meals alone.) At length it was stated that His Holiness, feeling somewhat unwell, had retired for the night, and his attendants and the guard of honour were dismissed.

Thus far we have collected details principally from an eye witness; the events which followed are a matter of history: the proclamation of an Italian

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republic, the order and moderation which characterized its earliest proceedings; the firm resolve on the part of the new Government to act strictly in accordance with the laws, so that during the republic, thefts, riots, and insults were unknown, and a man could walk safely through every part of the city by day or night.

It is also known how every possibility of reconciliation between the fugitive Sovereign and the people whom he had deserted, was closed by a declaration of his will published the 27th of November, almost immediately upon his arrival at Gaeta, in which he rescinded all the concessions he had made between the 16th and 24th of November; and finally refused to see a deputation dispatched to Gaeta by the two Chambers, composed of men who were held in the highest reputation, and were bound to no party. They were empowered to make overtures to the Holy Father on behalf of his people, to represent to him the difficulties his absence threw in the way of a peaceable termination of the dispute, and to prevail on him to return and make provision for a suitable system of government. But they were rejected with contumely, and the consequences were what might have been expected: we are familiar with the burst of popular indignation, the letting loose of passions hitherto restrained, the days of revolution which followed. The fair portrait of political freedom had scarcely been limned, before it was blotted and defaced by acts of democratic violence.

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Meanwhile the worst results foreseen by the truest patriots, who could recognize that freedom can only exist where law and order are maintained, began to take place. The fugitive at Gaeta could make his appeal to Catholic Europe. We know by whom that appeal was answered, and that republican France was found ready to overpower by force of arms, republican Rome, and to hand her over bound hand and foot to the despotism from which she had escaped. We have neither time nor space to record all the heroic deeds which marked that unequal contest; suffice it to say that on the 3rd of July, 1849, Oudinot, the General of the French army, entered Rome, and at once sent the keys of the city to the Pope at Gaeta.

A threatening murmur was heard through the city as the conquerors entered: suddenly there burst forth a desperate shout of "Long live the Republic!" Tri-coloured banners were raised under the impetus of maddened passion; but when the French received orders to use their arms, the people became silent.

In a few days the Pope's Vicar, Cardinal Patrizi, arrived in Rome. One of his first acts was to issue an edict commanding the people to assemble in the Church of St. Peter's, in order to unite with the French army in singing the "*Te Deum*" for the blessing of a Pope restored to power. On the 15th of July the Papal arms were replaced in their former positions throughout Rome, under a salute from the Castle of St. Angelo.

We have been compelled to a long digression; but

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the histories of Luigi and Gian were so inwoven with public events, that without a slight sketch of these we should scarcely have understood the midnight conference to which, through the medium of Beppo, Gian pledged his friend at the baths of Caracalla.

The hour of siesta had passed, and the city was awakening to the life and activity which characterize the streets of Rome after sunset, when the young Father Luigi di Sforza bent his steps towards the Vatican, more intent on obtaining a pardon for his friend, that on the ecclesiastical business concerning which he had been summoned. We say to the *Vatican*, for the former residence of the Holy Father, the palace of the Quirinal, had become obnoxious to him since the evening of his ignominous flight, nearly six years ago: since then he had not resided there. The small portion of the Vatican inhabited by the Pope is never seen, except by those who are admitted to a special audience. It is immediately under the apartments allotted to the Secretary of State, Cardinal Antonelli. The simplicity of his private rooms contrasts strangely with the untold treasures accumulated by the Minister, whose collection of antique gems is of European celebrity. In apartments, then, furnished with an absence of luxury or decoration which would be inconceivable in the abode of any other sovereign prince, the now aged Pontiff lives his somewhat solitary life. His really benevolent countenance brightened into a smile as Luigi knelt before him, and the benediction with which he greeted him

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was, in this instance at least, no form. The young priest, more than many far beyond him in rank, station, and years, had power to soothe the Holy Father,—to reconcile him to himself. Ever and anon his broken pledges, the hopes he had excited only to disappoint them, his vanished popularity, the bloody struggle which had laid low so many of his subjects, weighed heavily upon him; to hint such feelings to his Minister of State, was, with every show of outward respect, to call up on Antonelli's saturine features, the smile, half contemptuous and half compassionate, which Pius knew so well, and dreaded so much; which seemed to say, "Well for you, who are so weak and vacillating, that *my* hands hold the reins of government; well for you, who have still some stirrings of a conscience towards God and man, that I am your counsellor and guide, who have cast off every other allegiance but the triumph of our party and the consolidation of hierarchal government."

Thus the Pope and his Minister acted in concert, and thought apart. With Luigi it was far different. He was, it is true, anti-liberal in principle, a jesuit both in profession and practise, but his errors arose from an imperfect and partial grasp of truth. He had no sympathy with Antonelli's mundane policy and schemes of temporal aggrandizement; his private life was one of austerity and self-abnegation; his endeavour to subdue the flesh to the spirit was sincere, though the means by which he sought to accomplish it were erroneous and therefore ineffectual.

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The warfare carried on within his own breast he believed to be the same, in its real nature, with the contending principles which had convulsed his country. The earthly, the temporal, must be subdued to the spiritual; there must be no appeal from the authority of Christ's Vicar upon earth. He was not altogether blind to the corruptions which had rendered priestly rule obnoxious to the people, nor would he have opposed temperate and gradual reform, emanating from the Pope himself; but he had observed with anxiety and disapproval the Liberal concessions which marked the first days of his reign. It had appeared to the young Jesuit in no other light than an unlawful abdication on the part of the Holy Father of the powers committed to him. Pius was more solemnly bound, in the eyes of Luigi di Sforza, by the vow he had as Pope taken to God, than by the promises he had as Sovereign made to his people.

We can, therefore, readily believe that when the Pope was troubled with the qualms of a half awakened conscience, the view taken of his conduct by Luigi was welcome and soothing. "Was he not the father of his people? Must he not act towards them with wisdom as well as indulgence? Could he lawfully sacrifice their higher to their lower interests? Nay, was not the very loss of his popularity an honourable distinction, since it proved that he could forego so dear a delight as the affection of his people, rather than violate the sanctity of his oath to preserve and

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transmit unimpaired, the powers of the Popedom?"

With such arguments had Luigi on the evening of which we are speaking, as on many former occasions, sustained the courage and conforted the heart of the holy Father; after the business for which he had summoned him was concluded, Luigi felt that the favourable moment was come for introducing the name of Gian Ferretti. He mentioned his return to Rome, the interview he was about to have with him, the probability that he had come to throw himself on the clemency of the Holy Father, and he besought with the eloquence of friendship, that he might convey to him a message of grace.

"Ferretti has disgraced my name, broken his priestly vows, borne arms against his Sovereign, but thou hast loved him my son; it is enough: lead him to my presence, and teach him to be what thou hast been,—a prop to my throne."

At the same moment Antonelli sought the presence of the Pope, on a matter of formality relative to the singing of some State papers; this done, his Sovereign instructed him to make out a safe-conduct for the exiled rebel, Gian Ferretti, who could not otherwise show himself in Rome. Antonelli at this juncture discovered an omission: one of the papers he had intended to lay before His Holiness was wanting. With a complimentary smile at Luigi, and a flattering assurance that such fidelity as his could be trusted anywhere, he delivered to him the key of his private writing closet, and requested him to fetch it.

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On his return from a long and fruitless search, for the Minister of State (let us hope unwittingly) held the missing paper in his hand, all his hopes were dashed as to Gian's pardon. The Cardinal had assumed an aspect of unusual importance, while the Pope, with an altered and half averted countenance, addressed Luigi thus:—

"I spoke hastily, my son, in yielding to thy request. Thou shalt have better guerdon for good and faithful service than the pardon of a rebel, who could but disgrace thee, and endanger our holy cause."

Luigi understood only too well the hopelessness of urging his suit further in the presence of the Minister, and again kneeling to the Holy Father, he withdrew.

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CHAPTER XI.

MIDNIGHT REVELATIONS—A BITTER PARTING—THE CHILD-COMFORTER—GLOOMY THOUGHTS.

It wanted yet half an hour of midnight; the moon was almost at the full, and shed a flood of silver radiance upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, which turned night into a softened day. A dark and solitary figure paced its immense platforms, and again was lost to view as it passed into the shadow of its dizzy arches. It was a marvel that in the pre-occupation of his mind he trod safely, for danger lurked at every step. The vegetation mantling these ruins is so luxuriant, that even by the light of day it masks the chasms which open treacherously at the feet of the explorer.

A false step, which he with difficulty recovered, recalled Luigi di Sforza to his danger. He scrambled to a height from which he commanded more than one approach to the Baths, and there sat down to collect his thoughts, while the night breeze made low music in the long grass and pendulous creeping plants at his side.

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Accustomed as he was to a rigid self-control, and to yield his will without question to his spiritual directors, he had found it hard to submit quietly to having the boon already granted to him torn from his grasp. Had the Holy Father refused his first application, deference both to his person and office would have softened the disappointment; but that another, whom he knew to be both feared and disliked by the Pope, should step in with apparently so much ease between him and the object of his desire produced feelings of rankling displeasure, which he was doing his best to control.

This harshness towards his friend had drawn out in fuller measure his sympathy towards him, and he had almost forgotten that Gian had been a patriot; nay, had borne arms in the national cause. He had come thus early to the place in the fear that he might miss him, for the assigned rendezvous covered a large space; nor had the brief message specified whether Gian would seek the refuge of one of the subterranean passages connected with the Baths, or venture, under cover of night, to the more tempting part of the ruin occupied by Luigi.

Luigi had therefore posted himself where he commanded the view of the southern entrance to the interior. He had selected his position well. Midnight arrived, and in the stillness of night the muffled tread of one who was as yet concealed from him, fell upon his ear. In low tones he chanted a Benedictus of rare beauty, in which his voice had blended in

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former days with that of his friend. It was with a rush of feeling he could hardly control, that he heard the floating melody of Gian's voice borne onward by the breeze, in ever approaching distinctness. In a few moments more they were seated side by side, every difference for the time forgotten; for "as in water face answereth to face, so doth the heart of a man to his friend."

The consciousness, however, of the occasion on which they had met last, could not be long delayed. Luigi was the first to tell his tale: that he had followed his Sovereign to Gaeta, making one of his little court there; that he had questioned every messenger from Rome as to the fate of his friend, but that he could obtain no tidings of him till the invasion of the French, when the name of Gian became conspicuous as a defender of Rome; that on the return of the Papal government to the Vatican, he had sought still more diligently, knowing the temper of the restored Government, and that every rebel of note would be a mark for political vengeance.

He would fain have warned his friend and aided his escape, "But in truth, Gian," he concluded, "I was seeking for one whom, for his own sake, I desired not to find, and at length I indulged the hope that you were safely sheltered under the protecting care of our Holy Mother, in some voluntary exile, and would one day return when your patriot ardour was cooled, and the restored security of hierarchal rule would enable the Government to show

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acts of graceful clemency towards those they had formerly denounced."

"My brother," he resumed, "I deemed this morning, when thy message told me thou wert in Rome, that the favourable moment had come. It is not for me to speak of any services I may have rendered to the Holy Father, enough, that he has shown me an unmerited amount of favour and condescension. Gian, I believed he would not think thy pardon too great a boon to grant me. I have been with him this evening, he had already granted all, had bid me lead thee to his presence, had even encouraged the hope that he would again take thee into his service. But the Secretary of State came in and exercised his accustomed tyranny: all was reversed, and now, Gian, my brother, as I love thee I must bid thee fly. Doubtless the *sbirri* are already on thy track: let not to-morrow's sun see thee in the streets of Rome."

Gian grasped the hand of his friend, grasped it again and again, but for a while words came not: his heart was too full for speech. Long exiled from his native land, it was inexpressibly sweet to him to turn to a love so generous and enduring. Must he break this spell? must he alienate this friend? It was hard, he would fain have enjoyed his newly-restored friendship a little longer, but moments were precious, and his tale was long.

"Luigi, how can I speak that which must grieve thee? yet loving thee as I do, how can I keep silence? It was a noble and generous endeavour to procure

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me a pardon from thy master, but thy success would only have given me the deeper pain of refusing the grace thou hadst obtained for me. Luigi, I am no longer a member of that Church in which I once served as priest." He lifted his eyes to a quiet planet shining overhead, and continued, "My soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken, and I am delivered."

"How, Gian!" said Luigi, suddenly withdrawing his hand. "You have made shipwreck of faith: you have become an unbeliever!"

Gian's answer was to rise, and in low thrilling tones to repeat the Apostles' Creed. There could be no deception in those heart-utterances, slow, solemn, and rising at the close to a look and tone of glad and grateful triumph.

"All this," he continued, "I now stedfastly believe; but, brother, my days of unbelief were those in which I proclaimed and ministered to others the mingled truth and error from which in heart I revolted, and from which I am now set free. Hear me, Luigi: thou wilt grant this much to our long-tried friendship?"

He reseated himself. "The days have been, Luigi, when I have feared to lay open to you my whole heart, lest it should imperil your friendship; it was an unworthy fear: it shall actuate me no longer."

He then related to his friend that which the reader already knows,—his spiritual doubts and struggles, days of conflict and nights of wakefulness in the

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Collegio Romano, the tenacity with which he still held to the dogma of transubstantiation, the casual circumstance which broke the spell, his appeal to those who should have been able to instruct him, his horror at discovering their incredulity, and the mockery with which they treated his doubts.

Luigi's indignation rose. "Wolves, in sheep's clothing!" he cried. "Gian, Gian! why was I kept in ignorance, I who would at least have fought shoulder to shoulder with thee in this battle with thine inward foes?"

"Believe me, Luigi, when my kinsman ascended the Pontificial throne, it was less as a Patriot than as a Churchman who thirsted for reform, that I rallied round the standard he had raised. You cannot have forgotten that ecclesiastical reforms involving discipline were commenced. I believed that, in accordance with these, the Pope would be obliged to proceed to a revision and entire renovation of the doctrines taught by the Church. This idea filled me with brightest hopes: I loved my Church, I loved my vocation as one of her ministering sons, but I hated the duplicity I had for some time felt myself compelled to practice, of proclaiming as true, what I either doubted or knew to be false. Now, I believed with joyful expectation, the day was at hand when the supreme head of the Church would sanction and himself initate reforms.

"These were hopes, Luigi, you could not have shared: you would have thought them extravagant,

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dangerous, and I did not confide them to you; you know how soon and how cruelly they were disappointed. From that time our paths diverged, and in despair that a Pope could ever be a reformer, I ceased to frequent the Quirinal, and cast in my lot with those who saw no safety for the State but in separating the temporal powers of the priest-king from his spiritual functions: free-born Italy must be no longer under the rule of the monk. It was but to act consistently with this principle that I allowed myself to take an open part in the demonstration of the 16th of November, and asked in the name of the people for a secular ministry and a constituent assembly; yet believe me, Luigi, that while the hearts of thousands around me on that day beat high with hope and enthusiasm, mine was heavy with the thought that thou and I must for the first time meet as political foes. In the Quirinal I scarce saw any face but thine; and till the day dawned the following morning, I paced the deserted street before the palace gates to watch for thine exit, and tell thee how true to *thyself* was the friend who could not espouse thy canse."

Gian again grasped his friend's hand, and it was not this time withdrawn; but, after a brief silence, Luigi said, "Thou hast told me of a deep and dangerous error, and it hath borne its bitter fruits in thee; but it is less than I feared. Not for this will holy mother Church cast thee from her bosom if thou returnest to her in prayer and penance. Accept

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with humility the chastisement of an outcast's life on earth, and believe that the place of a son may yet be thine in the Church triumphant in heaven."

"Nay hear me still, Luigi: I may not purchase thy continued friendship at the price of concealment. When the sovereign Pontiff returned to Rome, I fled from my unhappy country barely in time to escape arrest. The world was before me; I had to gain my bread; my heart still clung to my profession as a Romish priest, but the door of it was closed to me, at least in my native land. I wished to escape to Piedmont, the last sanctuary of freedom which remained to Italy, but the difficulty was great of passing the frontier. I could not consent to the fraud of feigning a name for my passport, and the name of Gian Ferretti, which had rallied together the sons of freedom, had now become a badge of infamy. Choosing the most unfrequented roads, and travelling on foot, chiefly by night, my progress was slow. I disguised my priestly garb, and assumed the dress and hat of the *contadini*.

"Arriving one evening at the lone house of a farmer, I waited to inquire my way. He stood under his vine-covered porch with a kindly good humour in his countenance which attracted me. It may be that the weariness expressed in my voice and gait awoke his compassion, for he invited me to enter, and set before me wine and refreshment. I thoughtlessly removed my hat, and became at once aware of my imprudence: my tonsure betrayed me as a dis-

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guised priest. My host began to hold a whispered conversation with a woman who might have been his wife or sister, signs passed between them, and leaving me to the hospitality they had provided for me, they withdrew to the luxuriant garden which surrounded the dwelling, where I could observe them through the window engaged in earnest communication. I meditated a retreat, and was already looking round the room for another exit than that by which I had entered, when my host returned.

"With singular tact his first words set my fears at rest. 'The Signor Padre does not wish to be known? His wishes are respected: he is safe here.'

"I bowed my head in acknowledgment. 'The padre,' he continued, 'can return a hundred-fold any slight services we may have been able to render him. My wife's sister lies upstairs in the last stage of mortal disease; she had the unhappiness to offend our priest by reading a prohibited book, and he refuses to perform for her any offices for the dying. Will the padre hear her confession, and remain with her while life lasts? the delay cannot be for many hours.'

"My assent was readily given, and I was conducted upstairs. As the door of the patient's room was opened I could hear her agonized inquiry: 'Will he not come? oh, will he not come?' and I could see the satisfied smile which broke over her wasted features, when her sister whispered that a padre was at the door.

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"Left alone with my penitent, I knelt beside her to receive her confession. She placed in my hand the little book which had drawn upon her the anger of her priest, and which she could not prevail upon herself to give up at his bidding. It was a small Italian New Testament, and had been given to her by an English tourist. The seal of the confessional should perhaps be upon what she told me, Luigi. She was what you would have called a heretic: yet she believed only what the book had taught her. She did not ask me for absolution; all the fear which had made her long for it seemed to pass away as she went over the ground of her hope. 'Sir,' she said, 'it is *He* who said, "Come unto Me." Jesus Christ, He is the King, is He not? The Lord of our Holy Father the Pope. I was so weary, I could never cease sinning. I did so many penances: they did not ease me; priests absolved me, but the weight remained. I grew ill, I thought I should die; I thought such a sinner as I must pass ages, whole ages, in purgatory. Then a stranger gave me the book: I met her at a holy spring,—I had gone there to ease my soul. She came to me, for I was weeping bitterly: I told her my grief, and she said there was comfort for me in her book. She told me my great debt to God was paid,—paid in blood.' Words began to fail her here, for life was ebbing fast, but with trembling finger she opened the book at a well-marked page, and pointed to the words, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'

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She gazed wistfully in my face for a moment, and then said, 'The padre has now heard all: can he give me his blessing?' Luigi, what was I, that I should come between this soul and heaven-sent words of peace? I blessed her: and ere the words had died on my lips her spirit had passed away.

"During the hours that intervened before I resigned my charge of her remains, her book was my study. I had seen many death-beds, but never one before, from which the sting had been so completely extracted. I read the words, 'The sting of death is sin, the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' I looked on the features of the dead; the smile yet lingered there, which told that these words had been to her sober, earnest, glorious truth. Luigi, I saw and believed, and from that time to this the teaching of the Church has bound me, *only in so far* as it agrees with the teaching of the book."

Gian paused for an answer from his friend, but none came, and he continued, "Her family were eager to know whether I had reconciled her to the Church; my mind was then too much agitated with the new thoughts which had taken possession of it to say more than, 'She rests in peace;' and seeing me in possession of the obnoxious book, they were satisfied. Years have passed since that time, Luigi, but the morning star which then arose upon me heralded the day. Wild storms broke over my youth: to escape them I sought peace in the life of a priest. I have

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found it now: the world cannot give it, the Church cannot give it, but Christ can."

Still no answer.

"God has cared for me. My humble friends introduced me to an English family who had been travelling in the States of the Church: the gentleman engaged my services as travelling guide and companion in northern Italy; I accompanied him to England, and by his kindness have never needed employment or support."

"What infatuation tempted you to expose yourself to the danger of a return to Rome?" said Luigi, almost moodily.

Gian answered in low and measured tones expressive of steadfast resolve, "I have come here to die for my friends, for my beloved Italy. In the days of struggle for independence I bared my breast to the bullet, though no higher blessing was at stake than political liberty. That breast now holds the secret of a liberty wherewith Christ makes free. I will go from place to place and tell it to hearts bowed down as mine was once, under a yoke of bondage. How long my working-day may last, God knows. I will, with His help, neither shorten it by imprudence, nor lengthen it by any cowardly denial of the truth. Oh, Luigi! I came first to Rome that I might see *thee:* no soul so dear to me as thine; thou hast power and court favour and all that can sweeten life, hast thou the peace which can make thee welcome death?"

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There was a long pause, but Luigi spoke not. "I have put myself in thy power, thou canst now denounce me; but I will not wrong thy friendship by such a thought. Luigi, we must part, for the earliest streak of dawn lies upon the hills."

In agitated accents Luigi spoke to himself. "Where is my conscience as a Propagandist? *My* soul is established in the faith; were it not so, could I have withstood his words: and I must see him depart to tempt the unwary, to allure the sheep from the fold; must I not save him and them against his will? must I not love his soul better than his body? Oh, God, it is hard, for I have loved him well!" He buried his face in his hands, his temples throbbed painfully.

How long he thus remained he knew not, but when he raised his head the daydawn had perceptibly advanced, and he was alone.

"What have I done?" he said. "My will was not against it; I closed my ear to the sound of his retreat: I cannot pursue him now. Oh, Holy Mother of God, forgive this one act of human weakness, and my heart shall know no more relentings when thy sacred cause demands a sacrifice. Gian, Gian! have I looked on thy face for the last time? God grant it may be so, and that it may never be my lot, my brother, to be thine accuser."

The sun was casting level beams over the Campagna ere Luigi could sufficiently compose himself to return to his abode; wearied in body and mind he threw himself upon his bed, and woke when day was far

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advanced with a sore consciousness of the mental struggle through which he had passed.

His first visit after the noonday heat had passed, was to the Palazza of his cousin the Countessa Barberini di Riaro. They might have changed places since yesterday. *His* was now the pensive and careworn look, while the chimes of *her* silvery laughter mingled with little Zillah's merriment, as she stood before her, catching at a bunch of cherries held high above her head. God be blessed for the little ones! How infectious is their glee! How often, when the toils and cares of life have withered our freshness, their early dew falls upon us! Their sweet unconsciousness of all, whether of pleasure or pain, which lies beyond the present moment, repeats to us the parental admonition, "I would have you without carefulness." In return for our protecting love, they give us of their own trustful gladness. Truly we have been the gainers: we have received more than we have given.

On the entrance of Luigi, the Contessa threw the bunch of cherries into the lap of her little playmate, and drew him aside to a distant part of the room, eager for his history of the midnight interview. Gian had been a favourite both with herself and her husband, and in the early liberal days of Pius IX. they had favoured his aspirations after political freedom. His offences were very pardonable in the eyes of the Contessa, and she had hoped much from the intercession of Luigi in his favour.

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He told her freely of what took place at the Vatican, and of his own disappointment; but restraint and reserve marked all his words when she questioned him as to his interview with Gian himself. He had resolved to bury in his own breast the knowledge of his apostacy, partly from a regard to Gian's safety, partly because his conscience was burdened with the share he had had in his escape.

His answers therefore were vague and unsatisfactory, and he was glad to be able to parry the eager inquiries of his interrogator by drawing her attention to the child, who now stood a few paces from them, looking wistfully, as if she thought the colloquy had lasted quite long enough, and play might well begin again. Truly any heart might have warmed to her, standing there in her childish beauty, the soft wistful eyes kindling into a smile which spread rapidly to the rounded cheeks and lips as she caught the eye of her friend. She held up a dimpled hand filled with cherries, while two more of the coral berries hung poised upon her ear, and contrasted well with the dark soft curls which clustered over her neck. The arch look was irresistible, and the Contessa caught her to her bosom; but with the act came the keen remembrance of her lost Beatrice, the unwelcome consciousness how widely a *possession* differs from a *loan*.

Her eyes were moist when she turned them again upon her cousin, and she said by way of explanation, "Zillah and I are great friends; her parents have

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lent her to me for a villeggiatura, which we are to begin to-morrow. That reminds me, Luigi, when does the Holy Father remove to Castel Gandolfo? The summer heat is so early this year, he will surely soon be driven from the Vatican. My little summer retreat, you know, almost joins the grounds of his palace; and as you are in such frequent attendance upon him, I should hope to secure a visit from you. Ah, it will be lovely there! Overlooking the Alban lake we shall be able to breathe."

"Thanks my cousin, I shall not forget;" but he spoke abstractedly, for he was occupied with the child who, with the gamesomeness of a kitten, was frolicking about him, as he caught and hid her cherries.

"Ah, little one! you and the padre would soon be friends, I see: you will like him to come and see us at La Ricola?"

"Is he a padre?" said Zillah. "Has he a little girl? will he bring her with him? I should like that very much."

She could not understand their amusement, her request being made in very sober earnest. Lugi asked,

"Who are her parents? I have seen her before with you, but I think you did not tell me her history; strange even at her age not to know this."

The Contessa Barberini sent her off in high glee to inspect the progress which Rosina, her maid, was making in dressing the new bambino which was to

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be Zillah's companion on the journey. As soon as she was fairly off the premises, she answered her cousin's question.

"Her name is Luppino, her parents are Jews; but if all Jews were like them (I speak at least of her mother, for her father I have scarcely seen), we should soon cease to think of them as a degraded race."

The glow of truthful, human affections faded from the young Jesuit's face; he was again the lonely-hearted priest, as he said severely,

"My Church's enemies are mine. I must regard a race as accursed which refuses alike her chastisements and her indulgence. None shared more largely than the Jews in the clemency of our Holy Father when he began his reign. Have conversions increased among them? Is not their obstinate resistance to our holy religion dogged as ever?"

"My cousin, they have more to say for themselves than you would think: but I say to you as I say to Zillah's mother, 'I have no head for argument, but I have a heart to love, and I love the sweet babe as the prisoner loves the sunbeam which penetrates his cell."

"And you do not lose your opportunity, Contessa, of letting fall on her infant mind words which may be winged seeds, and lead her, in time, to the arms of our Holy Mother? it would be a pure and acceptable offering to lay upon her shrine."

"Nay: there I am bound, alike by honourable

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feeling and actual promise, to do and say nothing which might in after years turn her from the religion of her fathers."

Luigi's countenance grew very dark; but the bounding steps of the returning child, as she threw open the door and ran with glee to show to her indulgent friend the bambino already dressed by Rosina's nimble fingers, put an end to the conversation.

The padre, Lugi di Sforza, took his leave. He was lost in gloomy meditation on the Contessa's last words,—"the religion of her fathers." "Is it thus that my cousin can talk of the infidel Jews and their stiff-necked unbelief? Methinks I shall do well to put her father confessor on his guard; such perverted liberal notions are ill-weeds and grow apace; she learnt them from her husband. When shall we see the days of faith restored,—when the one Church under her Supreme Head was the ark beyond which none dreamed of safety? Each is ready now to commit himself to the surging waters, in his self-made craft of private opinion; what wonder that so many make shipwreck of faith. Alas, Gian, my brother, that *thou* shouldst be among them!"

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CHAPTER XII.

SEEKING AND FINDING PEACE—HARVEST IN THE CAMPAGNA —THE UNKNOWN PADRE—RECOGNITIONS.

THE day on which Juliet despatched Bernard to Rome in quest of Dr. Selwyn had been one of anxious watching in Villa Palestro; the heavy eye and parched lip of the sufferer told of the ravages of unchecked fever, and her grandchild trembled lest when the season of reaction should follow, it might prove too much for her advanced age and exhausted strength. Her half unconscious moans went to the hearts of her affectionate nurses, and their inexperience could suggest no remedies but the simplest palliations. As the day wore on she sunk into a broken slumber while Juliet was bathing her fevered brow. The pale face and languid movements of the fair young creature who bent over her, told of the weariness which she refused to admit in words, as she repeatedly declined Maria's offers of assistance.

"No, Maria: let me do it while I have her still." And the white quivering lip told the fear which tormented her.

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For the twentieth time Maria stole away to watch from the window of an upper room which commanded the approach to the house. Her face as she returned this time was bright with good news.

"They are coming," she said; "*all, Signorina mia:* Dr. Selwyn, Bernard, and Signor Medico Luppino."

It was with different feelings from those which had before approached so nearly to antipathy that Juliet now heard that name, still it could not fill her with the joy which made Maria's countenance positively radiant.

Leaving her companion in charge with the invalid, she went herself to meet the doctors. A graceful inclination of her head expressed her thanks to Signor Luppino, as Dr. Selwyn explained why he had accompanied him, and she gave, at his request, her account of the illness with firmness and self-possession; but when she would have inquired as to the gravity of the symptoms, her voice failed her. Give way, she would not: she took refuge in silence.

Touched with sympathy and respect, the doctors merely said, "We shall see our patient and return to you: we hope to bring you a cheering report."

Thankful for solitude, Juliet indulged in a few heavy sobs, and breathed out her fervent desire: "Oh, God, Thou wilt not leave me alone; not *quite* alone!" With no very distinct perception as yet of the errors of the creed in which she had been reared, her prayers had of late generally been addressed, not

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to Virgin or saints, but to the God "after whom she was feeling, if haply she might find Him."

She heard the sound of returning footsteps, and stood, pale but firm, to hear the opinion of Signor Luppino, who advanced to meet her, followed by his friend.

"The case is less serious than you suppose, Signorina: the illness has been unchecked as yet by any efficient remedy, but our patient gives signs of an excellent constitution, and before many days have passed we hope that Mrs. Percival may be making good progress towards recovery."

The colour flushed into her face, but left it paler than before. To Ben Ezra, who had all his life been accustomed to self-government, there was something inexpressibly touching in the struggles of so young a creature to obtain the mastery over her feelings, for lack of any one to whom she dared betray them. He said, in a low tone, as he led her to a seat, "God will be gracious to thee: He will not leave thee comfortless."

He turned to his friend: "You will explain to the Signorina our plan of treatment, and I will see Miriam before we go."

Maria, whose delight in Signor Luppino approached very near to hero-worship, was indulged with a tête-á-tête which set her mind at rest on more points than one. Her mother was at the present moment employed and well provided for in the house of an invalid Jewess of good means, who had wished her

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to take care of herself and her household: it was an engagement likely to last a long time. Monsignor Frascatari had apparently resigned himself to the loss of his victim: the Jewish quarter was no longer visited by his creatures, as it had been for a time after Maria's escape, and report said he was about to leave Rome for the hot season.

"And the Signora?" said Maria inquiringly, "and Zillah?"

"Ah, yes: I had not told you. If I can find that no harm would arise to you, Miriam, I might bring the little one some day to see you when I visit Mrs. Percival; the Contessa Barberini wished to take her to the hills, she was growing languid with the heat of the city. Her house, La Ricola, stands on the hill above the Alban lake, only a few miles from here. I shall try to see her to-day on my return. Her mother bears her absence bravely, but it must not last too long, for life is shorn of its sunbeam when Zillah is away."

He looked at his watch: "I must hasten away. The God of Israel shield and bless thee, Miriam! Thou art happy here?"

"So happy! treated like a child and sister, but"—

"But what? Fear not to tell me. I will be to thee as a father."

"The English lady is good as an angel: she reads to me our holy books."

"That does not make you less happy?"

"No, no: it is new life to me!" and her dark

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eyes grew eloquent with feeling. "But dare I tell you, Signor? You will not hate me? You will not betray me to my mother and our nation?"

He looked at her with compassion: "I will not believe that you have anything to tell me which could disgrace you, Miriam. Speak, my child, without fear."

"Signor, the English lady is always peaceful and glad. She says it is because she knows and loves Jesus of Nazareth. She says He is the Messiah: the Christ of God. She has read to me Moses and the Prophets. Had I heard them before? But little, I think. They never came to me with power as now. The Signora rarely added words of her own, but Moses and the Prophets spoke to me of Jesus of Nazareth. I did not wish to be convinced: I thought of my mother; of you, Signor. I have not yet read the Christian's Book, but I love Jesus of Nazareth. I believe He was the 'sent of God.' To-day, for the first time, I dared to pray to Him. Oh, do not tell me I was an idolater! I had such peace in my heart: I am sure He heard, He seemed so present with me. Now I have told you all. I am glad I have not deceived you, though I fear you will cast me off."

He took her hand kindly: "Fear not, Miriam: you shall never lose your place in my regard for being true to your conscientious convictions. I, too, admire and highly venerate Jesus of Nazareth, but I cannot accept Him as our long-expected Messiah,

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who when He comes will reign over the house of Jacob, and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth; nor can I think you right to pray to Him, for the God of Israel is one Lord, and He will not share His glory with any creature, be he the highest angel or the holiest prophet. But I judge you not, and your secret is safe with me. Neither would I have you turn away from hearing our holy books; but pray, with our royal Solomon, for a wise and understanding heart. But indeed I must not linger. God in heaven bless and guide thee, my poor fatherless child!" he said, as he laid his hand kindly upon her head, and withdrew.

She stood musingly. "The Signor is wise. He is one of the best of our nation, and I am an ignorant girl; but he has never prayed to Jesus of Nazareth: he has never felt the answer of peace. I cannot give it up. I cannot remain where I am. I must know more. I must read the Christian's book."

Juliet came in bright with hope: "She will live, Maria! She will recover! Already she is quieter. Your Signor Medico understands it well. He will see her again to-morrow."

The two girls sat together the same evening, gazing from the window of the patient's room upon the glories of an Italian sunset. Mrs. Percival's restlessness was giving place to a calm and unbroken slumber, and for a time they neither moved nor spoke, lest they should disturb it.

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The last ray had shot upward, and the gorgeous tints over the Campagna had rapidly given place to the shades of night. The girls could now talk without fear of arousing their patient from the sleep which had become deep and motionless.

"What beautiful sleep, *Signorina mia!*" said Maria: "no moaning or tossing now."

"Yes," said Juliet, in a dreaming tone, as if she rather answered to her own thoughts than to the speaker: "she took the remedy, she did not strive to make it effectual, she only yielded to its influence, and so she slept. Ah, *Maria mia,* there is a fever of the spirit, and there are restless tossings which will not be silenced, and for many days they have ráged within me. Her words aroused them, but I thank her for it; for the torpor of death was upon me before, and I knew it not. Do you want to know, Maria, how deadly the sickness is? I will tell you." And with that she took the hand of her friend, and looked into her face, her eye seeming to flash fire even in the expiring light. "I hate myself for it; perhaps you will hate me. Maria, it is this: *I cannot love God,* though He is good, and great, and pure. It has always been so, but now I know it; and I moan and toss restlessly, helplessly. Maria, I look on that dreamless sleep, and I say, 'Where is the remedy for the fevered heart? where is it, that I may take it and be at peace?'"

Maria's answer was to bend over the hand she clasped, and let fall upon it the hot tears with which

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her eyes overflowed; then she added, "My Signorina has her Messiah: has she told Him all?"

Juliet was silent.

"*I* have prayed to Him to-day," Maria continued.

"You have prayed to Him, Maria! You?"

"It was the first time, and I trembled lest I was sinning against the God of Israel; but I said to myself, 'If Jesus of Nazareth was only a man who lived 1800 years ago, He cannot answer; if He lives and can answer, He must be more than man.'"

"Did He hear you?"

"Yes: though I uttered no sound, and spoke to Him only in my heart."

"What makes you think He heard you?"

"He gave me what I asked. I told Him my doubts, my troubles: I felt Him near; I was sure He pitied me. I did not stop till all was told. My heart was eased of its load: He gave me peace. I know little about Him, *so* little; but I am sure He lives, and loves, and hears, and answers."

A long silence followed, in which Juliet mused on the words of the young Jewess. Strange that she should owe to her the clearest notion she had as yet received of her Saviour as a living Friend who could hear and help her. What had He then hitherto been to her? what place had He occupied in her religious belief? Surely one either very remote or very imaginary. She had thought of Him as a God afar off, to be approached through the human sympathies of His virgin mother, and she had dwelt in

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pleasant reverie on the Holy Child who reposed in her arms; but the Man Christ Jesus, touched with a feeling of her infirmities, ever living to welcome and to intercede for her, as yet she knew not. Maria's openness however helped her to break through her extreme natural reserve. "We will find out more about Him, *Maria mia*," she said, "and God will spare my *Nonna* to help us."

From that day the girls read together, with ever-increasing wonder and delight, the narratives of the Saviour's life and death, and the joy and thankfulness will well be believed, with which, during her days of convalescence, Mrs. Percival watched from her bed or couch their intent and eager study, their heads now bent over the sacred page, now raised to exchange with each other kindling glances of sympathy.

Maria knew no other name for Him than "*my* Messiah." As a Christian Jewess, her *appropriation* of Him became intense; her love to the God-man, the Saviour of the world, was deepened, because in taking on Him human flesh He choose that it should be of the seed of Abraham and of the royal house of David. Now the readings of Mrs. Percival in the Old Testament bore abundant fruit; here was He who came not to destroy but to fulfil, Himself made obedient to the law, Himself the substance of the types.

In the faith of Juliet there was less of intellectual activity: she only knew that she was *at peace*,—

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that she had found a Friend. She had found a remedy which met the extent of the evil to be cured. The law which, in all her helpless struggles to obey it, had yet been approved by her as good and excellent, was now written on her heart. "She loved Him," because she saw "He had first loved her."

The effect on a character like Juliet's of this new-found happiness was as when a rose opens its silken leaves and delicate fragrance to the sun: her severe self-restraint was at an end. She no longer tried to stand alone: she had One on whom to lean. To her grandmother she was in a great measure unreserved, and no cordial was more reviving to the dear old lady than the sweet intercourse she could hold with her beloved child.

Signor Luppino had at first paid daily visits, and became, as usually happened to him, an acknowledged favourite both with the patient and the family. Motives of delicacy prevented him from inviting Maria to any renewal of the confidence she had reposed in him, and to say the truth he was not very uneasy on her account. Judaism had hitherto presented itself to him in favourable contrast with the corrupt Christianity by which he had been surrounded in Rome; but to his candid and truth-loving mind the distinction was sharply defined between the sensuous and glittering forms which usurped the place of religion under the rule of the priest, and the simple godliness of his interesting patient, accompanied by its fair fruits of patient

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sweetness and unselfish love. He observed Maria closely: whatever change he saw in her was for the better, and he was ready to say, "If she becomes like her instructress she will have no serious errors to unlearn."

In one of his visits he was, at Mrs. Percival's request, accompanied by little Zillah; and the child's delight as she twined her soft arms round the neck of her recovered favourite, "Miriam," was amusing to behold; she made friends very rapidly with Juliet, who in allusion to their former conversation said, "The little child's laughter cannot fill the empty heart, *Maria mia*, but it makes the full heart overflow."

Signor Luppino felt it right to explain to Mrs. Percival that Miriam's persecutor had left Rome for an absence of several months, intending to visit Greece and the Ionian Islands; any peculiar vigilance as to her being seen, might therefore be considered for the present as unnecessary; he in consequence wished Mrs. Percival to consult her own convenience as to retaining her in her family, for he would himself be ready to offer her a home.

"We will not be selfish, Signor. I am aware of Maria's deep attachment to you and your family: she has good reason for it. She shall therefore be told of your liberal offer, and make her own choice. I can hardly expect that she will prefer to remain with us; but should this be her wish, remember that her presence amongst us gives us nothing but

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comfort and pleasure, and is, I believe, a real advantage to my grandchild."

So Maria was told of the choice of homes which lay open to her, and the orphan's heart swelled with gratitude towards God and her generous friends. That Signor Luppino should have made such an offer to her, after her private confession, implied a confidence which touched her to the quick; but the Christian's God was now her's, and she chose to dwell among those who shared her faith. From this time she became Juliet's acknowledged friend and companion.

The villegiatura which had only been undertaken for a short time on Juliet's account, had been necessarily, through Mrs. Percival's illness, extended, till it was too late to think of returning to Rome. The summer season had commenced in good earnest, and to Mrs. Percival especially it was needful that she should remain among the hills. Guiseppe consented to remain majordomo of the house in the Largo dell 'Impresa, and the Villa Palestro was retained for the season.

As health returned, the dear old lady's mind resumed the tone of vigorous and benevolent activity which by long habit had become to her a second nature. She was now comparatively at rest as to her grandchild and Miriam, and her sympathies were free to take a wider range. She was full of interest as to the groups of *contadini* who began to be scattered over the Campagna to gather in the riches

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of the harvest-field. If these gay children of the South contrive to spread over a day, work which the English peasant would accomplish in two or three hours, they have at least the merit of pursuing it in unfailing good humour. Mr. Story well describes the festive nature of the harvest season, from the time when the reapers are hired in the Piazza Montanara, to the joyous harvest home. "At the earliest gleam of dawn," he says, "when the appointed day for harvesting arrives, they gather together in the Piazza and form themselves into companies. All is gaity and bustle. Each company has a cart decorated with coloured cloths, garlands of laurel and box and leafy branches of trees, to which are yoked one or two pairs of white oxen, with their horns, necks, and yokes gay with sprigs of flowers, rosettes, and fluttering ribbons. Into this some of the company mount, while the rest walk beside it or follow after it, playing tambourines, bagpipes, pipes, and other instruments. Dancing, singing and laughing, the festive processions thus take their way through the city, and issuing from the different gates wind picturesquely along over the Campagna to their golden ground of harvest."

During the harvest they never return to the city, but work all day, from dawn till twilight, rising by three o'clock, and intermitting only two hours at midday, when they take their *siesta;* at seven o'clock they eat their breakfast, at noon they dine, after which comes two hours of sleep under the trees

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or in any spot of shade; at seven the day's work is over, and supper is followed by singing, dancing, and other amusements. Thus, despite the hard labour under a burning sun, the harvest is a continuous festival.

They live well during the harvest, partaking of meat three times a day, whereas their ordinary bill of fare only includes animal food once a week: this is to the credit of the farmers who employ them, the humblest of whom will save his money for many a day to supply his labourers with wine and nourishing fare. They always remain on the ground, where the food is brought to them, and they eat and drink together there.

On many of the farms is a huge *caserna*, or stone barn, where the labourers sleep at night; but when this is not the case, temporary *capanne*, or huts of thatched straw, are built near the harvesting ground, where the principal cooking is done, and where the harvesters sleep on straw spread upon the earth. The poor and improvident, who sleep without shelter upon the bare ground, but too often have to pay the severe penalty of fever and ague, and return to their homes wretched, sallow, and shaking with disease.

At the harvesting season time is too precious to be lost, and even on Sundays and festa-days the labourers are permitted to work. An altar is however raised for each company in the fields, which is decorated with flowers and green boughs; and here

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in the open air mass is performed for the reapers, who kneel about the altar on the grass.

The gardener who kept in order the somewhat extensive grounds of Villa Palestro had a brother and two nephews engaged in reaping a part of the campagna overlooked by the Villa. Mrs. Percival was becoming by this time tolerably fluent in Italian; sometimes with and sometimes without the help of Juliet or Miriam she held frequent intercourse with her dependents, and readily won their confidence; but none took more pride and delight in the kindly notice of the lady than Peppo the gardener, and the choicest produce of the garden, whether of flowers or fruit, was daily culled and offered to her with a homage approaching to veneration; and when she recovered sufficiently to resume her visits to the garden, Peppo was fertile in devising occupation for himself which would keep him near her, and enable him to indulge his propensity for pouring into her sympathizing ear his history, past and present.

He had one day to tell her of his anxiety with regard to his nephews, Francesco and Antonio. "The Signora would pity them, they were foolish and young, they had slept on the open ground; their father, who knew better, had tried to stop them, but in vain, and they were both struck down with the malaria fever. They were very ill, and unless they could get to the mountains it might go badly with them."

"Where are they now, Peppo?"

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"In the *caserna*, Signora; but—" and the old man shrugged his shoulders and gasped—"who can breathe there?"

Mrs. Percival remembered how freshly the air had blown through her own spacious apartment during her illness, and how much she had benefited from the experience of Signor Luppino, and to the old man's admiration she soon arranged a plan by which his nephews might be domiciled in an outlying part of the Villa, where she would care for their being properly nourished and doctored.

On Signor Luppino's next visit two more patients were waiting for him at Villa Palestro.

Mrs. Percival soon paid a visit to her humble guests, taking Miriam with her as interpreter in case of necessity. After refreshing them with cooling drinks and fruit, the old lady drew from her bag the book, which she prayed might be to them as water from the well-spring, and began to read.

Miriam soon noticed the looks of recognition which passed between the patients. At length Francesco could keep silence no longer, and raising himself on one elbow, while he tossed back the shaggy hair from his forehead, he fixed on the lady his glowing black eyes, and said, "They are the Padre's words."

"They are God's words, Francesco, and He speaks them to you and Antonio. But who is the Padre?"

"None know his name, Signora, or where he lives. He is only 'the Padre;' but he has a book like yours, and when he reads the singers stop their

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choruses, and the *canta storia* lays down his guitar, and the dancers leave the *saltarello*, and all is hushed to hear his words.

"Yes, we heard him on the harvest-ground, but when the fever seized us he missed us from the rest, and asked for us. It had grown dusk in the *caserna*; we were panting with fever and heat, and dreading the return of our work-fellows; and when the door opened I turned my head away; but it was the Padre, and he sat between us and read the words you have just read, Signora." They were these: "Whoso drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life."

"Does the Padre know you are here, Francesco?"

"We had not heard of the Signora's great kindness when we saw him last; he may however hear of it from our companions, but he never tells where he may be heard of, and no one knows when he will appear."

There was evidently some mystery attaching to "the Padre" in question, which Mrs. Percival was content to leave unexplored; but Peppo was more vigilant and suspicious, and came to his mistress with some agitation the same evening, for instructions how to act.

"The Padre" had come to the villa and asked for Peppo, or for permission to see his nephews.

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"By all means take him to them, Peppo; and before he leaves them tell him the lady who lives here is English, and would like to make his acquaintance."

The reader will have surmised that the mysterious stranger was no other than Gian Ferretti, and can well believe that in a life so lonely and fraught with danger as he had chosen for himself, the prospect of a kindly reception at the hands of an Englishwoman had special attractions for him; all that he heard from Francesco and Antonio tended to heighten his anticipations.

Mrs. Percival purposely received her guest alone, and the curiosity of Juliet and Miriam was not a little excited at the length of time they were closeted together. At length Juliet's fears for her grandmother overcame her dislike of intruding, and her low tap being followed by an invitation to enter, she came up softly behind Mrs. Percival and whispered, "*Nonna mia*, the Signor Luppino would look grave: it is long past your hour for rest."

"You are right Juliet, and we shall, I hope, have many opportunities of seeing our new friend. Signor Padre, let me present to you my grandchild." Mrs. Percival noticed that her child shrank back at the word *Padre*.

"Juliet, he has learnt to give up all for Christ's sake, and his teacher has been the Book you love. Go now, my child: I will follow immediately."

Gian refused any other hospitality for the night

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than that of being allowed to watch by Francesco and Antonio. Mrs. Percival gave to Juliet and Miriam the next morning full details of Gian Ferretti's chequered and eventful history. When she inquired for him she found that he had vanished with the dawn, but with the promise to the sick men that they should shortly see him again.

On the following evening Mrs. Percival found, on conducting Signor Luppino to his patients, that "the Padre" was already with them. The physician and the priest looked at each other for a moment, and a deep flush overspread the usually pale face of Gian Ferretti, as he saw that he was recognized. Luppino had never joined the ranks of the Patriots; his recollections were too vivid of the real benefits conferred on the Jews at the opening of the present Pontiff's reign. The two men had met before, passed each other in the streets of Rome; but beyond this they knew each other only by reputation. Gian could not doubt that by this time large rewards were offered for his apprehension; the Jews were proverbially lovers of money; Luppino had never resisted the government, would he now brave the consequences should it be known that he had connived in the escape of a rebel?

Gian's face was ill-formed for concealment, and the physician skilled in observation had read off his doubts and fears almost as they arose. In passing from one patient to another he contrived to whisper,—

"You have nothing to fear from me, Signor Padre:

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we meet here on common ground. But be wary, and show yourself only to friends."

Gian bowed his thanks, and could he have doubted the words it would have been impossible to doubt the broad impress of truth set on the open face of the speaker. When Signor Luppino heard afterwards more of the history of the exiled priest from Mrs. Percival, his feelings of tolerance towards him were changed into those of cordial esteem.

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CHAPTER XIII.

ZILLAH'S DANGER—SAVED BY A PRIEST—LUIGI'S TREACHERY —SECRET BAPTISM—STEALING A CHILD.

"YOU are too kind, Contessa Barberini," said Signor Luppino, as he stood with her in the verandah at La Ricola, engaged in the little contest which generally closed each visit, as to whether Zillah should return with him to Rome. "For her own sake I would gladly leave her, for bloom like this," tapping her glowing cheeks, "will not last in the Via Rua; but Adriel will tell you," turning to his son, who had on this occasion accompanied him, "that his mother must be now my first consideration. Confined as she is principally to her couch and the house, she pines for the gay prattle and endearments of her child."

"And would it be impossible to prevail on the Signora to become for a time my guest?"

Ben Ezra shook his head. In truth, though it would have been difficult to explain the matter without offence to the Contessa, the habits of the Jewish physician and of his family were too strictly

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in accordance with the numerous restrictions* imposed by Jewish tradition, to admit of their associating with a Gentile family, except in the case of a babe like Zillah.

Courtesy forbad the Contessa to press her wishes further. Ben Ezra requested to leave Adriel with his sister, while he paid professional visits in Albano. He would then return for his son and the little one.

Zillah's regrets at leaving all her country enjoyments, were pretty evenly balanced by the prospect of returning to her mother, whom she had missed

* "We will give as instances only two or three restrictions in matters of food. Among the fish tribe, those that have fins and scales are lawful, all others are forbidden. A Jew may not partake of flesh and butter at the same meal; nay, they may not be placed on the table at the same time. This is founded on Ex. xxiii. 19.

"For the same reason also cheese made by Gentiles is forbidden, which they call "meat and butter." All the cheese they consume is made under the superintendence of a Jew.

"Cattle and poultry must be slaughtered by a Jew, and according to prescribed rules, otherwise the meat is as unlawful as that of forbidden beasts. The shochet, or killer, must be duly qualified for his profession. The rules concerning killing are too numerous and complicated to be given here. To mention only one: he has a tedious task to perform in extracting a certain number of sinews from the hind quarters of every animal, otherwise they may not be eaten. This prohibition is founded on Gen. xxxii. 32. The main object of the ceremonies in killing is that every particle of blood may be extraced before the flesh is eaten."—*Mill's "British Jews,"* pp. 63, 64.

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more than the Contessa would well have liked to believe. She asked permission to go and feed for the last time her favourite fishes, which sported in a cool stone reservoir, shaded by water-lilies; the water clear as crystal, except where the surface was fretted by the falling spray of a fountain.

Adriel would have accompanied her, but the Contessa claimed him as her companion. She sent Rosina, on a mission she never found irksome, to be the playmate of her little charge.

The charms of his little sister supplied at first subject-matter for the conversation between the Contessa and Adriel; but it took by degrees a graver tone, and he was already confiding to her his ardent hopes as a Jewish youth, that times of emancipation and triumph were at hand for his nation, when Rosina's light form was seen crossing the lawn with a speed which sent a thrill of fear through the heart of the Contessa. Adriel, whose seat was turned from the window, observed the change in her countenance.

"What is it, lady? Are you ill?"

Before she could answer there was a sound of rushing footsteps, and Rosina stood panting before the verandah, beckoning to Adriel. After a few moments she gained breath to say, "Come, save her: she is in the water!"

At one bound the young man had cleared the verandah, and was flying over the grass in the direction to which Rosina pointed; but *she* could not leave her lady, whose pale lips and trembling limbs

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showed her to be on the point of falling. A quarter of an hour, perhaps more, followed of terrible suspense to Rosina, while she endeavoured to restore the Contessa to consciousness. We are not bound to share the suspense with her. We will follow Adriel's flying steps.

He took a wrong turning, and almost desperate with fear, dashed through some bushes which concealed the fountain. At last it was before him; at least its feathery spray could be seen over a grassy eminence which still intervened. This was cleared with a few bounds. His heart as he gained the submit sickened with uncertainty, but it was an uncertainty in which hope mingled largely, for a stranger was already at the fatal spot. His dripping *soutane* showed him to be a priest. His back was turned to Adriel. He sat on the margin of the reservoir. One arm encircled the child who lay upon his knees, while with the other hand he felt for some pulsation, some sign of life.

"The God of Israel bless you, Signor Padre! It is my sister: you have saved her!"

"I have saved her," said the priest: "yes, I have saved her." But his manner was absent, and he gazed into her face, and stooped down to kiss her marble brow, as if strangely unconscious that prompt measures must be used to restore suspended animation.

Adriel could not but fear, from his bewildered manner, that he had struck his head, or otherwise

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injured himself, in his benevolent efforts to save his little sister. He was already physician enough, however, to know that her's was a case which admitted neither of ceremony nor delay; so catching her up, he returned with all speed to the dwelling. On his way he met two or three of the servants, for the alarm had by this time spread through the house.

If any thoughts could have been at such a moment diverted from the beautiful little creature lying apparently dead in his embrace, one pretty arm hanging powerless over his shoulder, they would have paid a tribute of admiration to the quiet and collected manner in which, while every nerve thrilled with emotion, Adriel gave clear directions to the bystanders, which converted them into valuable assistants, not even forgetting the Contessa, to whom he sent a message of hope, while he entreated her to spare herself the shock of seeing the child till animation was restored.

She could not be prevailed on to remain away, and was endeavouring, with Rosina's help, to steady her steps to the room where they were engaged with the little one, when her path was crossed by a priest, drenched from head to foot. A glance told her that it was Luigi di Sforza.

"You, Luigi! It was you who saved her?"

"I had a few hours this afternoon at my disposal: I purposed to spend them with you. I was crossing your grounds, but my eyes were bent down, and I

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was busy with my thoughts. A sharp woman's cry aroused me. I looked up. Rosina was flying from the fountain: she had not seen me. I ran to the spot, and under a network of lilies I saw gleams of a child's form and dress. I know not if she had sunk more than once. I plunged in and drew her out. The water gushed from her mouth, and I feared all was over; but it was not so: her heart beat feebly, I am sure of it. Grieve not for her, my cousin: *I saved her*," he said, with the same emphasis which had puzzled Adriel. "Ere she departed the Holy Mother appeared to me, with arms extended to receive her: for *her*, death was better than life."

"Are you dreaming, Luigi? She is not dead! No: it cannot be! But now I had a message of hope from her brother."

The door opened, and the beaming face of Adriel Luppino was the best cordial the Contessa could have received. Oh, come," he said: "she asks for you." Turning he saw Luigi: he wrung the hand of the stranger. "What do we not owe to you! She was the darling of our house. You too will come and see her, though she does not understand her debt to you."

Again the flow of his gratitude was arrested by the strangeness of the priest's manner. Could it be other than welcome news to him that the child he had risked his life to save, was restored to consciousness. Another thought suggested itself, awakened by a certain stateliness in Luigi's manner: perhaps

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in the mind of the priest, whose dress marked him as a Jesuit, prejudice against the Jew existed in an exaggerated form; and though the instincts of common humanity had forbidden his leaving a helpless babe to drown, he might review a kindness rendered to "the accursed race" with little self-gratulation or pleasure.

This was a subject on which Adriel was only too sensitive, and the bare suspicion flushed his face with crimson as he turned to follow the Contessa, without renewing the invitation to Luigi.

Zillah was by this time quite herself again, though she returned her friend's caresses somewhat languidly.

"I wish her father were returned," she said. "Do you know, Adriel, whether he had many patients on his list to day?"

"Only one family, Contessa; but his visits there are sometimes long."

"Where do they live?"

"You have heard him speak of them: he took Zillah there one day. They live at Villa Palestro, on this side Albano."

"Oh, it is near, and there is only one road to it from here: a horse shall be made ready for you. It will be a relief to me if you go and tell him what has happened; you may meet him on his way back."

Did Adriel remember that Juliet Morini lived at Villa Palestro? We are not bound to inquire. He certainly saw the force of the Contessa's suggestion, and rode off from La Ricola at a pace which scarcely

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made it likely he would meet his father on the way.

Arrived at the Villa he was shown into a shaded room, where Juliet and Miriam were engaged in preparing some articles of dress for Peppo's nephews. Mrs. Percival had accompanied Signor Luppino to his patients.

Perhaps it was excusable in Adriel that the clearness and self-command which had distinguished him so much an hour ago, were wholly wanting to him now. Miriam welcomed him with cordial sweetness, and Juliet bowed with her native courtesy, and waited to know the object of his visit; but his words were few, and shyly uttered.

"There has been an accident, Signorina, and my father is wanted."

"Ah!" said Juliet, rising with an expression of concern: "I will tell him."

But Miriam, though never allowed now to put herself in the position of a dependant, was quick to perform any little offices of loving service.

"Excuse me, Signorina; *I* will go:" and Adriel and Juliet were alone.

It flashed upon her that she had not seen him since the day of her father's death. She would have liked to thank him; but she dared not trust her voice to speak on this subject. She did, however, say words which thrilled him with joy at the time, and were often remembered and repeated to himself afterwards.

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"Your father has become a friend in our family, Signor. I owe more to him than I can tell for the skill with which he treated my grandmother."

How stupid he felt! He seemed to have nothing to say, though he muttered some acknowledgment; and his eyes danced with pleasure, to a degree that would have surprised Juliet, had she happened to have been looking at him.

A few moments' silence followed, then she seemed to recollect something. "Miriam is long. You spoke of an accident, Signor; perhaps it is urgent: I will go myself to your father."

Could anything be less what he wished? His excitement was hardly kept within good breeding in the urgency of his remonstrance. The Signorina must not trouble herself: all danger was over, but his little sister had fallen that afternoon into the water. She had recovered: all was right now; but their kind friend the Contessa Barberini di Riaro had feared lest any precaution against ill consequences should be omitted, and had sent him for his father.

In Juliet's mind the confusion of his manner was at once accounted for, and in all the frankness of her ready sympathy, tears rose to her eyes as she said, "That beautiful child! She has been in the water! She has been in danger! Ah, what you must all have suffered! Your father must know directly:" and she would not hear of any further remonstrance, but hastened from the room, excitement lending a

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glow to her complexion, which in Adriel's eyes made her more cruelly lovely than ever.

"Mother, mother: you were right," he said to himself as she closed the door. "What have I to do here? Oh, God of Israel, how widely we are separated!"

Adriel was not left very long to his reflections; for his father came in, with a face at first full of anxiety. On hearing, however, his son's report, his expression changed by degrees to one of profound thankfulness; not only because one of his children had escaped a terrible danger, but because the other had shown qualities likely to reflect honour on himself and his profession in after-life.

"We will return, my son, and if Zillah is quite herself again, I will take her back with us; it must however depend on this, for your mother must not hear of the accident, till she can see with her own eyes that no evil has resulted."

Meantime, the little object of all this solicitude had sunk into a quiet sleep, and the Contessa was free to return to her cousin. She found him apparently absorbed in reverie, from which he aroused himself abruptly at her entrance, and asked news of the child. She too was struck with the strange absence of pleasure he seemed to feel in her recovery.

"My cousin," he said abstractedly; "you are much attached to this little one!"

"Assuredly, Luigi: attachment to her has lured me back to life,"

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"Have you never thought that you might render an acceptable service to the Virgin Mother, by removing her altogether from her unbelieving parents, and bringing her up in our holy faith?"

"But, Luigi, how could this be possible?"

"Do not be startled, Contessa Barberini, if I suggest your adopting her. True, her birth is more than ignoble, it is disgraced; but you who are childless, would forget this in the comfort of having with you, in coming years, one who would love you as a daughter."

"Do you think Luigi that such a thought never occurred to me? It was my dream of hope from the moment that I saw her; but I was allowed to cherish it only for a day, my first sight of her mother, to whom I went to propose it, set it hopelessly aside."

"She would not consent?"

"If you knew either of her parents you could not ask: they would sooner part with life itself."

"They *must* part with her," he muttered; but in a tone so low as to be inaudible to the Contessa, who after a time finding him very moody and silent, returned to her little charge. Zillah soon after awoke, apparently from some bad dream of her late accident, for after two or three gasps, she said: "No, no: I *won't* stay with you fishes. Help me, Rosina!"

She looked brightly up when she saw who was watching her, and clasped her arms round her friend's neck.

"Dear Contessa! but where is mamma?"

"Are you in such haste to leave me, Zillah?"

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"Oh, no! you had better come too." Children easily dispose of difficulties, at least to their own satisfaction.

By the time that Signor Luppino and Adriel returned, the Contessa could not honestly say that she thought her little favourite unfit to accompany them. Ben Ezra asked to be allowed to render a father's thanks to her deliverer; but Luigi was nowhere to be found, so after making a note of his name and address that he might write to him, and taking a grateful leave of the Contessa, he departed with his children to the heavy and sultry atmosphere of the Ghetto.

How much the little re-united family had to hear and to tell that evening; how ashy Deborah's pale cheek became when she heard of her darling's danger; how she scanned her from head to foot to verify the assurance of father and brother that she was unhurt; and, when late in the evening, Ben Ezra had to attend to a patient whose summons was urgent, how mother and son sat together, and words of wise and tender sympathy soothed the tumult of feeling which had been awakened in the young man's mind by his visit to Villa Palestro.

We will leave the Luppino family to the enjoyment of their reunion, while we inquire into the singular dissatisfaction the Padre Luigi di Sforza betrayed at the success of his benevolent and courageous act. It was the less explicable to his cousin,

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because she knew, that, apart from the instincts of humanity, Luigi was personally attached to her little favourite: why then should he appear indifferent, nay, actually disappointed, on hearing of her recovery?

This was the question the Contessa meant to put to him, as after waving her last farewell to the Jewish Physician and his family, she turned again to seek her cousin: he was however still nowhere to be found, either in the house or grounds, and unless we wish to participate in her continued perplexity, we must follow him as he retraces his steps to Castel Gandolfo, and he must allow us to share in his solitary musings.

"Where is this to end?" he said to himself. "Yet have I erred? could I have done otherwise? When, in the case of Gian, I weakly and sinfully preferred the claims of a human affection to those of our holy religion, I afterwards vowed that the Virgin Mother should never again find me a defaulter in her service. Was it not her voice within me which bade me baptize the child? did she not stand beside me with open arms, waiting to receive the new-born infant soul? I fondly thought it was for this that I discovered the faint flutterings of life, as she lay helpless and breathless on my knee. I thought it was by the special interposition of the Holy Virgin, that her departing spirit yet lingered, till the saving words could be uttered and the regenerating water applied; I looked on her as she laid in her infant beauty, and thought how fair the flower with which

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I had been permitted to wreathe the brow of the Queen of heaven; and, now: where is it to end? With what difficulties have I surrounded myself! The child is a daughter of the Church: she cannot be left longer to the corrupting influences of her infidel home. I alone know of her baptism, but I may not, dare not conceal it. I had hoped so much from the proposal for her adoption; at the very moment of her baptism, with no time to think or choose, I had given her the first name which occurred to me,—that of Beatrice; I believed afterwards the Virgin had inspired it, in order that the new Beatrice might in her measure replace the old.

"And now what is before me! all that is most abhorrent to my feelings. Oh, God, that the child had died! that she had indeed passed into those maternal arms which were waiting for her.

"I cannot face the Contessa: she is possessed by mistaken feelings of honour, which lead her to keep faith with infidels, even when their claims stand opposed to those of Holy Mother Church; nor do I expect the approval of my spiritual superiors, for the consequences of my act may cost them dear: the temper of the Roman people is against all coercion in matters of faith. Must I then stand alone? Ah, Holy Mother, forgive me! shall I render to thee no service but that which is easy? hast thou not vouchsafed to me in this very act a special sign of thy favour? Yes, I will go forward: only aid me by thy strength."

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He did not return, as he had intended, to the Pontiff, who was now at Castel Gandolfo, but retraced his steps to Rome, and sought "His Paternity" the General of the Jesuits, in his residence in the Convent of the Gesù.

He was right in supposing that his zeal in adding to the Church a little Jewish child, without the knowledge or consent of her parents, would find little favour with his superior. Here was no question of a brilliant name or a rich inheritance: had the child died, some faint praise might have rewarded him, but to claim and bring it up as a member of the Church, involved both perplexity and trouble.

By the advice of "His Paternity," he visited the next morning the Inquisitor-General, who sent him back to Castel Gandolfo to tell his tale to the Holy Father himself. Luigi was kindly received by his Holiness, though he could not but see that he, as well as the spiritual authorities whose counsel he had sought in Rome, would have been better pleased had he locked within his own breast the knowledge of Zillah's baptism.

The act however was done and could not be undone. The child had been brought within the pale of the Church by one of her priests, and by ecclesiastical law the claim of the Church upon the child superseded every other. With reluctant assent the Holy Father yielded to the representations which it cost Luigi much to make,—that the eternal welfare of the child must be considered, rather than the

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temporal unhappiness of the Jewish family to which it belonged. The necessary orders were given, their execution must be his own care.

The evening of the day drew on which followed Zillah's return to her parents. The weather had been close and sultry, and Ben Ezra had been detained for a great part of the day from his wife, by a case which required constant and anxious watching; Adriel was as usual absent at his studies. Under these circumstances Deborah had enjoyed with peculiar relish the enlivening company of her little girl: many a tale had to be told of her employments at La Ricola. The day was broken too by the arrival of a messenger from the Contessa, who sent to inquire after the little one and her mother, and to beg the Signora's acceptance of some choice produce from her garden. Deborah marked with some anxiety the languor the child showed during the hours of noon-day heat, and was willing that she should extend her evening walk with Naomi to an hour past her usual bed time. They bent their steps to the picturesque old Piazza Navona, now the vegetable market of Rome, whose three splendid fountains are supplied with the purest and brightest of all the waters of Rome from the Acqua Vergine. It was one of the evenings when, according to practice during the summer, all the benches and booths are removed, and the great drain which carries off the overflow of the fountains is closed. The basins then fill, and pour over the square, till in

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a few hours it is transformed into a shallow shining lake, out of which the fountains stand like islands, with their obelisks and figures, and in whose clear mirror are reflected the picturesque houses by which it is inclosed.

On this evening the water was rippled by a refreshing western breeze, and Zillah laughingly clung to Naomi as a guide, her own eyes being blinded by the soft dark curls, blown over her face by the wind.

Naomi saw that the child's laughter attracted a stranger, habited as a priest, who stood at the entrance of the Piazza: he allowed them to pass him, but she felt a discomfort unaccountable to herself, at the keen eyes of observation he fastened on her little charge. She fancied, as far as the rapidly fading light would enable her to judge, that he followed them at no great distance; if however there had been any *espionage*, it ceased when they entered the precincts of the Ghetto.

Deborah was still alone when they arrived at the house, and a flush of pleasure, as she opened her arms for her child, gave to her pale countenance a momentary semblance of health. She could not resist the request urged with tightly clasped arms, as Naomi stood waiting for her.

"Let me stay with you just a *little* while, *Madre mia.*"

And in the quiet and darkening room with her darling's head resting on her shoulder, Deborah lavished on her fond caresses, and talked with her

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of the great God of Israel, of His watchful care and protecting wing. "He was with you at La Ricola, Zillah: He saved my little one from the water."

"How kind of the great God of Israel: I did not know He saved me, they said it was the Padre." The child clasped her hands reverently as she pronounced the name of God: the children of devout Jews are carefully trained in reverence for the sacred name.

"He put it in the Padre's heart to jump in for you, my child. You did not see him to thank him, did you?"

"No: but I will thank him next time. It was the Padre Luigi, you know: he is very kind to me."

"Now kneel down by me, Zillah, and we will ask the great God to take care of you still."

In few and simple words she committed her treasure to His keeping; but alas no prevailing plea, "for Jesus' sake," clothed with power the petitions of this Jewish mother.

"You slept with the Contessa at La Ricola, Zillah: she did not pray with you?"

"No, *Madre mia;* no one prays with me but you. She did pray though;—only—"

"Only what, Zillah?"

"She was very kind to me; I don't like to tell, for I love her very much: but *you* won't tell any body. She did not pray to the great God, as you do: I heard her say other names, and," Zillah's voice sunk here to the lowest whisper, lest she should

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betray her friend to any one but her mother, "she played with beads all the time."

Deborah could not forbear a smile at the unconscious insult offered to the Contessa's rosary; but she rejoiced to see how clearly an honourable silence had been maintained towards the child on all matters of faith.

Naomi appeared again, and this time no appeal was admitted from her summons; but "the last kiss after she should be in bed," on which Zillah always laid great stress, was promised.

Deborah was about to make good her word, when Adriel entered, and the few minutes delay proved too much for the little one's drowsy eyelids; when her mother entered her own sleeping chamber, within which the small cot was placed, her quick ear caught the deep breathing of her slumbering child, and she shaded the lamp with her hand as she stooped beside her, and printed a light kiss on her innocent brow.

Ben Ezra shortly came in, wearied with the labours of the day; but before he allowed himself to enjoy the relaxation he always found in the society of his gentle wife, he went to his study to pen a letter of heartfelt thanks to the Padre Luigi di Sforza.

Half an hour later, as he sat by Deborah's couch fondling her thin hand and telling her of the case which had occupied him during the day, their attention was caught by the heavy tread of *sbirri*, an unusual sound in the Via Rua, especially at that hour of the night. The sounds, to their surprise,

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stopped at their own *portone*, the bell of which was sharply rung.

"Ben Ezra," said Deborah, in a trembling voice, "what is this?"

"Hush, dearest! listen."

An altercation was plainly heard, in which they could distinguish Naomi's voice refusing entrance to the intruders, who appeared to be forcing their way into the passage.

"Sweet wife, there is some strange mistake: promise me that you will remain here, while I inquire into it."

Ben Ezra's appearance had a quieting effect upon the *sbirri;* they were not prepared for the benevolent aspect and air of calm superiority, always impressive to those who saw him for the first time.

The sergeant of the force came forward, and with a respectful bow excused himself to the Signor, but he had orders to see his children, and inform himself as to their names and ages.

"But for what cause?" said Signor Luppino. "The Government knows me and my family; they know me to have been a peaceable subject, even in the days of revolution. I have only two children,—a son, lately received with kindness by the Cardinal-Vicar, and admitted to the curriculum of medical study; my other child is a girl, a mere infant. There must be some mistake, Signor. I entreat you to leave my house now: my wife is an invalid, and any prolongation of the suspense she is at this moment

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suffering, might seriously injure her. The order," glancing at a paper which had been handed to him by the sergeant, "is, I see, signed by the Inquisitor-General. I pledge my honour to appear before him to-morrow, and give any information he may demand as to myself or my children. If you require confirmation of my word, I have an intimate friend, an English physician, residing at no great distance, to whom I will accompany you; he will, I am sure, answer for my performance of any engagement into which I may enter."

The sergeant looked as if he had no relish for his task, but he said his "orders were precise, and he dared not disobey them. He would however use all care not to alarm the Signora, who need not see him, if the Signor would himself conduct him to his children."

With a sore heart Ben Ezra summoned Naomi, and charged her to remain with her mistress till he should return to her, which he hoped to do shortly.

The first visit of the sergeant was to Adriel's room, which was on the other side of the house from the entrance. Being absorbed in study, he had not noticed unusual sounds till his father and the sergeant were close upon his door. His surprise changed into indignation, as he searched his father's countenance, and saw the anxiety written there; at a sign from Ben Ezra, however, he suppressed any inquiry or remonstrance, and answered the questions put to him. His answers were written down as they were given.

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"Is it needful for you actually to see my little girl?" said Ben Ezra, as they closed Adriel's door. "She is asleep, and were it otherwise, she is too young to answer your inquiries herself; I can tell you all you wish to know."

"My orders are to *see* the Signor's children," said the officer, shrugging his shoulders.

As Ben Ezra had expected, at the sound of footsteps approaching the room where her treasure lay in her dreamless sleep, Deborah's excitement grew uncontrollable: she pushed past Naomi, and clinging to her husband's arm, pleaded—

"Not there! oh, not there! Zillah is asleep."

"For my sake, beloved one, return to Naomi now. Am *I* not here: Zillah's father, your husband?"

At the name Zillah, thus pronounced both by father and mother, the officer involuntarily shook his head. At the same moment a carriage was heard in the street, which seemed to stop either at or near the door.

Deborah whispered, "I am selfish, my husband: do not ask me to go for your sake, let me stay for my own."

What could he do but wind his arm firmly round the frail trembling figure, and lead her forward? Adriel had by this time recovered from his surprise; and hearing sounds still in the house, had joined the party.

At the door Deborah withdrew her arm from her husband: how noiselessly the handle turned under her touch!

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"Keep back, all of you," she said hoarsely. "I must see if she sleeps: I will not have her frightened."

She went forward with the shaded lamp. Her child slept,—such a sleep as angels love to watch. The mother placed herself so that her eyes, should she wake, would open first on her, and then beckoned to the others to enter.

The formal questions as to name and age were put, and the answers recorded; but the sergeant was a man,—as it happened he was also a father. His eyes wandered, as if in fascination, from the lovely child to the mother. They filled with tears, as he asked for a few moments' conversation with the father in another room.

"No," said Deborah: "I must hear all! Adriel, you will watch her." And she stood firmly by her husband, prepared to leave the room with him.

The officer threw up his hands, but she was clearly not to be dissuaded, and he followed. Ben Ezra led the way to his study.

"Signor," said the man, "I am very sorry for you, and for the Signora: this is cruel work; but you must know the truth. You are the victims of an act of treachery. Your little daughter has been baptized, and I have orders to take her away from you."

Ben Ezra's eyes were fastened on his wife: professional knowledge taught him the significance of the stony look which settled on her features.

"You are required," he said, "to take an infant girl from the roof of her parents, from the arms of

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her mother, on a vague rumour of her baptism. Signor, I tell you the child has *not* been baptized, and cannot have been baptized. She has been under no care but our own, and that of a lady of rank, who has ever honourably fulfilled her pledge in no way to interfere with our child's faith. And, Signor, I would caution you, or rather those who employ you, not to bring upon yourselves the displeasure of one who stands high in favour with the supreme Pontiff himself." He took up the letter which laid on his desk, and pointing to its address, "The Padre Luigi di Sforza!" he said, "Yesterday, Signor, the Padre Luigi di Sforza ventured his life to save that of the innocent child against whom this act of cruelty is meditated. Shall I add to the letter which thanks him for his courage, an account of this infamous plot and its execution?"

"Your words are severe, Signor; yet it grieves me to tell you you are catching at a rope of sand. It was on information given by the Padre Luigi, that this order was signed; it is to him I shall have to report myself when its execution is completed."

"I will go to him: I will go to him at once. Only promise me to withdraw from my house, and guard it from the outside till I return."

But the officer had heard strange stories of the inter-communication sometimes existing between the houses of the Ghetto, and he would not consent.

Ben Ezra covered his face, alike to collect his own thoughts, and to shut out the agony awakened by the

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sight of his wife's rigid features, who had neither moved nor spoken.

"Patience, Signor!" said the sergeant: "it is late; the Padre will not see you to-night: his orders must be executed. Compel me not to use force, or call in the detachment I command, now waiting outside your door: it will tell against you. Resistance is useless. Your child's comfort has been thought of; a carriage is waiting outside: it contains a lady who will receive her with all care, if you will, from your own arms; but delay is impossible. To-morrow you will make your appeal in any quarters where you have influence, but the child must be given to us now."

"And where," said the agonized father, "where are you ordered to take her?"

"That," said he, "it is not permitted to me to divulge."

Ben Ezra stood speechless, motionless.

"Decide, Signor! Shall it be by your arms or by mine that the child is taken to the carriage?"

Deborah made one bound forward as if to vindicate her own natural rights, and then fell senseless into the arms of her husband.

He laid her hastily on a couch, and by the rapidity of his movements contrived to reach the upper room in time to say to Adriel, "Ask no questions, leave the house quietly; and when the carriage before the door moves off, follow, and keep it in sight."

Then with a woman's tenderness he put aside the

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snowy muslin curtain from his darling's cot, and as he raised the sweet child to his breast, she half woke and flung an arm around his neck, then drooped her head heavily upon his shoulder and slept again. He threw over her a shawl of his wife's, and with a broken heart descended the stairs.

Outside the door he heard sounds of a scuffle: Adriel was contending with the *sbirri*, who refused to allow him to pass the threshold. On his continued resistance, two pinioned his arms, and a third pressed a hand firmly over his mouth.

The carriage door as Ben Ezra approached was opened from within, but the lady in whose arms he placed the child, happily without waking her, was closely veiled.

"For God's sake," he whispered, "tell me who you are, and whither you are going?"

But he listened in vain for an answer, the solitary ray of comfort left to him was that she received the little one tenderly, and seemed to say in her actions, "She shall find a mother in me."

The sergeant came up and ordered the coachman to drive away, which he did rapidly; it was too dark to distinguish any sign or badge, either about the man or the carriage, which could lead to future identification.

"Signor," said the man, "I may now relieve you of my presence, but I have orders to leave some of my men to see that no attempt is made at pursuit for the next hour."

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"Do your duty," said Luppino despairingly: "you have taken the jewel, watch the casket if you will." Then as if remembering himself, and with a gleam of his native courtesy shining through his grief: "I believe I should thank you, you have striven to do your cruel work kindly. My son is now I hope free to enter with me?" pointing to Adriel still in the hands of the police.

The *portone* stood open, at a sign from the sergeant the men placed Adriel within it, his father took his arm, leaning heavily upon it, and they entered the house together, closing and locking the door on the inside. For a moment Ben Ezra gave way, and a cry, a bitter cry burst from him as he sat on the nearest seat: Adriel put his arms round him.

"Bless thee, my son: *thou* art left to me, but the child was the apple of our eye. God of Israel, Thine eyes have seen it! forget not, oh Lord, judge Thou our cause." Then regaining self-possession, he rose: "Your mother, Adriel! we must return to her." They found Naomi with her, but the death-like swoon continued, and for the moment anxiety for her distracted their attention from the terrible event of the night. When at length she gave signs of life, a dull stupor seemed to benumb her senses: she did not inquire for Zillah, and showed no resistance at the preparations made for her passing the night in her husband's study; her nerves were at present paralysed by the shock, the reaction of excitement and fever had not as yet set in.

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Ben Ezra could not refuse his son's entreaty to be allowed to share his night-watch. They read together words of consolation from the experience of David. Ben Ezra wrote to the Contessa, telling her what had befallen them, acquitting her of all connivance in the treachery which had been practised against them, if indeed the cruel report was true, but entreating to know if she had any suspicion as to the authority on which Padre Luigi made his statement.

At the same time, with his father's sanction, Adriel penned a letter to Miriam Costello. We will do him the justice to say that the recollection that the letter would find her at Villa Palestro, that its contents might be communicated to Juliet Morini, did not soften the burning words in which he related the cruel wrong done to his parents and himself, by the Church of which, as far as he knew, Juliet was a member. Nay, had he been capable of analysing his feelings, he might have discovered that in one respect the venom of the wound rankled yet more deeply in his own breast than even in his parents', for it seemed to widen the distance which must for ever separate him from the object of his love. With the ungoverned feelings of youth he wrote words of stinging reproach against the system of tyranny which could tolerate and authorize such deeds, and bade Miriam beware lest some snare of priestcraft should lie concealed for her, under the allurements of her present home.

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So the midnight hour passed, varied by watchful attentions to the sufferer, in whom vital power had sunk so low that the flame of life needed to be fed by the constant administration of cordials. As the early light dawned of that summer morning, father and son became more painfully aware of the ravages which one night of grief had committed in those beloved features.

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CHAPTER XIV.

LUPPINO CONFRONTS LUIGI—A HOPELESS SEARCH—DR. SELWYN BAFFLED—ANTONELLI'S PIQUE.

"My poor friend! and this actually happened in your own house, and by order of the Government! Your child gone, torn from your arms! I hardly know how to believe it,—how to think you are not under the influence of some night-mare dream."

When the earliest sounds were astir in the city, Ben Ezra had ventured to leave his wife for a short time under the care of their son, that he might summon to his aid his valued friend Dr. Selwyn.

The tale had seemed at first too terrible to be believed; yet a glance at Ben Ezra's face, and his manly struggle to conceal his emotion, was all that was needed to confirm it.

"Come with me," he said, as he wrung his friend's hand: "my wife must be our first care."

Dr. Selwyn was soon at Deborah's side. He felt inexpressibly shocked as he gazed into her meaningless eyes. Her voice, always gentle, was now pathetic in the extreme; but the words she uttered were

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childish and unstrung. That reason was for the present unseated, was clear; but whether mind and body were sinking together, or whether either might recover their tone apart from the other, was a question which only time, and the most watchful treatment, could decide.

Ben Ezra did not even ask his opinion, as he turned from his patient. He could see at a glance that they had come to the same conclusion as to her case. But he took his friend to the room where stood the empty cot, and bowing his head upon his hands, groaned in the anguish of his spirit.

"Luppino, my friend, how many have had your ready help in the hour of need! 'Blessed is he that considereth the sick and needy: the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble.' This crowning sorrow may be a blessing in disguise. Your wife has no consciousness of her loss. What if consciousness should be only suspended till the hour of deliverance! Let me think for you what must be done. The first step is to gain audience of this priest. I would gladly go with you, but my presence is more needed at the side of the Signora. You will find me here on your return."

Ben Ezra looked his thanks, and left the house, taking with him the letter written the night before to the Padre Luigi.

Early as was the hour, the Padre was already out, but Signor Luppino was admitted to wait his return. None of the luxury attributed to Romish dignitaries

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was apparent in his empty chamber; and if the fragments of a meal left there betokened his accustomed fare, it was of the most homely and frugal kind. So far Ben Ezra was impressed in his favour. But he had not long to spend in surmises; the handle of the door turned, and the Padre stood before him.

The two men bowed to each other, but for a few moments neither spoke. Signor Luppino silently put into his hand the letter written the night before.

"It would be idle to affect ignorance of the cause of your visit, Signor Luppino. A great sorrow has fallen upon you. You have heard that I am the cause. You have come for an account of my conduct?"

"I was made to understand, Signor Padre, that the abduction of my little girl was authorized and executed in consequence of a rumour that she had been baptized. I am come to ask on what foundation this rumour rests?"

A spasm of pain passed over the countenance of Padre Luigi, as he forced himself to say, "On information given by me, as to my own act."

Luppino sprung up. For a moment indignation over-mastered him. He approached the priest with clenched fist. "*You* baptized her! traitor! How—when—where?"

Had Luigi either defended himself or quailed, Ben Ezra might have given vent to his feelings in a deed of violence; but he was too noble to assail an

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unresisting victim. He returned back to his seat, uttering aloud the words, "God of Israel, aid me!"

After a few moments, the struggle was over. He raised his eyes, and said in the low tone of mastered feeling, "Did you remember, when you committed this treacherous act on a little child who could neither understand nor resist you, that you were carrying desolation into a family of peaceable citizens, who have ever faithfully served the present Government? or did you perhaps think that the sons of Israel are too degraded to feel and think and love as other men? Signor Padre, I must do battle with my grief, for I am a man, and shall have strength to suffer; but my wife has sunk under it, it may be hopelessly. The vacant stare of idiocy looks out of the eyes which have been the light of my home."

Luigi di Sforza was at no pains to conceal his agitation. "Believe me, Signor," he said, "the suffering I have caused is abhorrent to my feelings. Had I forseen the circumstances in which my act would place me, my courage might have failed. But hear me. My life has known little of human affection. There have been few to love me, few whom I could love. Your little daughter found a place in my heart It was a love strongly mingled with pity. From within the sanctuary of the true Church, I saw her wandering with her parents in the darkness of soul-ruinous error. I longed to stretch forth a hand and draw her in. I could not have entered into such a pledge as that taken by my cousin, the

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Contessa Barberini. But I had no thought of the decisive act which has made her a daughter of our holy Church. Circumstances wholly unforseen impelled me to it. I found her drowning. It was not more an impulse to risk my life to save her, than it was an impulse, when I believed her to be dying, to exercise my priestly functions to place her soul in safety. Would you have had me act otherwise? Would you have had me care for the body, and leave the soul to perish?"

"At the time of your act, Signor Padre, if you were convinced that her moments were numbered, and if your creed really sanctions the absurdity that a few words pronounced by a fellow-mortal over an unconscious and dying child, can make the difference between its salvation and perdition, you acted with good intention. But my child recovered. God restored her to her parents and natural guardians. By what law, human or Divine, do you step in and tear her from us?"

"Ah, Signor, could the scales of unbelief fall from your eyes, while you might weep natural tears at the loss of your child's society, you would be filled with wonder and adoration at the grace extended to her. She has exchanged an earthly mother for the unfailing care and mighty protection of the Queen of heaven. Under her new name, Beatrice, she enjoys all heavenly blessings. Saintly women surround her, who will guide her infant feet into the way of peace. Fear no harshness for your child, Signor. She is under

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my own immediate protection. It cannot be that at her tender years there will be resistance to the truth in which she will be carefully nurtured. Obstinate heresy alone calls for severity in the training of the sons and daughters of our holy mother Church, and and in her case there can be little to unlearn."

"Signor Padre, do you think to comfort me by your words? Have I not lived long enough in this idolatrous city to know that no worse fate could befall my child than to adopt your faith? Rather a thousand times that she had never been rescued from a watery grave. But I waste words and time, Signor Padre. From you, I see, I have nothing to hope; unless, indeed, you will give me thus much of comfort, to tell me what walls inclose this treasure of my heart, and when I shall be permitted to see her. It is possible that a sight of her might restore her mother's wandering senses."

"Alas, Signor, you expect from me, who am but a subordinate agent, information I am neither permitted nor empowered to give. I cannot give you the least hope that your child will be restored to you, the laws of the Church do not allow it, would you then distress her, by keeping alive in her mind the memory of parents from whom she is hopelessly separated?"

Signor Luppino could not trust himself to speak; this bare-faced robbery and infringement of all his parental rights under the guise of religion, stung him too deeply. He bowed and withdrew.

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"Well: it is over!" said Luigi, as he found himself alone, and passed his hand over his aching brow. "The Contessa Barberini was right: these Jews are not all the degraded creatures I have imagined: true he spoke words against our Holy Faith, which two hundred years ago would have consigned him to the dungeons of the Inquisition, but we are fallen on degenerate and liberal days; and in this man's mistaken view, I have wronged him, I may therefore well pardon hasty words. What would he say could he know that I have but now left his little one. The Sister Monica tells me she never woke from the time her father placed her in her arms till the first sunbeam stole in through the window of her convent home, and then it was with the innocent inquiry, 'Where is mamma? she was coming to kiss me.' It was well thought of in the Sister to say I should 'come and tell her all about it.' I am glad I went early: her burst of tears at being in a strange place was very natural; but children are easily diverted. I can parry her inquiries for a few days, especially now that I know her mother is ill; and she will soon become the darling of the sisters, and learn to be happy without her parents: but, holy mother of God, it has been a hard duty to which thou hast called me! remember it to thy servant for good."

Whither then had the Padre Luigi bent his steps that morning to visit the little creature with whom he had been brought into such strange relationship?

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At no great distance from the Ghetto, and with easy communication from the Via di Ara Cœli, stands the famous Convent of Tor de Specchi, in the Via which bears its name. It is a beautiful specimen of a Roman Convent. The first hall is painted with ancient frescoes, representing scenes in the life of the Santa Francesca Romana, who founded the Convent; here on a table may be seen the relics of the saint, her veil, her shoes, the large bowl in which she prepared ointment for the poor. The Convent is no gloomy abode: apart from the superstition taught there, it is such a place as one might love to see children in, where all that delights the eye and recreates the mind might render lessons of religion attractive; the chapel is of great beauty, the gardens are fragrant with orange trees, the rooms are light and airy, and bear witness, in the religious prints and ornaments, in the flowers and birds and ingenious toys to be found there, that innocent enjoyments are encouraged and smiled upon. To do Luigi justice, he had chosen carefully and well in selecting a home for his little neophyte, and the child was the better prepared to appreciate its advantages as she had so lately returned from the beauties of La Ricola. The Sister Monica had been till lately the principal instructress of the children educated in the Convent. Failing health had compelled her to relinquish duties so onerous; but she pined for her accustomed interests, and the charge of little Zillah was one which she was ready and well fitted to undertake.

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Ben Ezra meanwhile returned to his altered home: there had been no change in the condition of the patient. The two physicians agreed to try the effect of pronouncing Zillah's name in her presence; her husband even carried her to their sleeping apartment, and stood with her in his arms before the empty cot; but the sight which unmanned him, drew from her neither moan nor tear, only the incoherent words were uttered more rapidly in a tone more pathetic, if that were possible, than before.

Nothing was left but to watch the wasting spark of life and seek to fan it again into a flame.

Dr. Selwyn undertook himself to wait on Cardinal Antonelli, it was a case in which the weight of an English opinion might be of value. He was at present with His Holiness at Castel Gandolfo, and thither the doctor went, after hearing from Ben Ezra the result of his conference with the Padre Luigi.

His reception by the Cardinal gave him no ground of complaint as far as politeness went. His Eminence listened with attention to his statement of the case, expressed "his extreme regret;" he was not however prepared to say that the Father Luigi, in the interests of the Church could have acted otherwise. The General of his Order would be the one to judge of the measure of blame, if any, which attached to him: Signor Luppino must state his case to "his Paternity."

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"Pardon, your Eminence: the boon sought by my friend is not the condemnation of the Padre Luigi, but the recovery of his child."

"Ah, that is another question, and one out of my jurisdiction: it must be brought before the proper tribunal; the Cardinal-Vicar is the judge in civil and criminal matters which concern the Jews."

Luppino shook his head when Dr. Selwyn returned and reported his visit.

"The Carnal-Vicar holds no court to-day," he said, "it is a *festa;* yet he might see you, as an Englishman, at his private residence."

Again Dr. Selwyn was courteously received, but met with answers equally discouraging. "It was a question which involved nice points of ecclesiastical law: the case had been put out of his reach by having been taken in hand by the Inquisitor-General, his own authority being but a branch of that exercised by the Holy Office."

Sore at heart at the idea of returning to his friend before something had been gained, he betook himself to the Inquisition. The Palace of the Holy Office does not stand prominently out to view, it occupies a sort of *cul de sac* behind St. Peter's. Its pleasant and handsome exterior would create no suspicion as to the horrors which have been perpetrated there; but on entering, the purpose to which it has been appropriated strike at once on the eye and the heart. Our readers will some of them remember the revelations which maddened the excited populace

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at the time of its suppression in February, 1849, when an edict of the executive Triumvirs was ratified by the National Assembly to the following effect: "The Tribunal of the Holy Office is for ever abolished in Rome." Alas, its suppression was only of five months duration, for it was restored by Pius IX. in the following June, though its meetings now take place in the Vatican.

Each Visit paid by Dr. Selwyn left him more hopeless than the last. The Inquisitor-General to whom he now appealed, made the admission that the excellent Padre Luigi had shown more zeal than discretion, but the act and its consequences were alike past recall.

"And how will you face public opinion," said the doctor, "when this act becomes the common talk of Europe, in these days of religious liberty and toleration?"

He shrugged his shoulders: "That is the affair of our Holy Father and the Secretary of State."

He returned at last to the Via Rua wearied in body and spirit: it touched him to receive Ben Ezra's fervent gratitude for his unsuccessful services. He found the condition of the invalid slightly improved, there had been some rallying of bodily strength, but her eyes remained meaningless as ever, wandering restlessly from speaker to speaker if she heard voices around her, but otherwise fixed open with a settled look, as if the weary eyelids would never close again.

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Her husband and his friend were seated beside her in the darkened room, each with saddened heart and busy brain, revolving if any means were within their reach, either to relieve their patient, or to deliver the family from the terrible misfortune which had fallen upon it, when a carriage was heard rapidly approaching, and without waiting for the assistance of her servants in alighting, the Contessa Barberini stood at the *portone*.

Ben Ezra hastily descended and received her in his study.

He extended his hand, but words failed him. "It is false," she cried; "utterly and cruelly false. I kept her as the apple of my eye, she was never out of my presence or that of Rosina, we can prove it, we can answer for every hour of every day of her absence; confront us with the accuser: my cousin has been imposed upon."

"Alas, no, Contessa; it is true. The act was performed by the Padre Luigi himself:" and he gave her in brief the confession of the priest.

Southern passions are strong, and Ben Ezra read even on the refined countenance of this high-born lady a strength of anger and resentment which led him to fear for the consequences. He found himself before he was aware pleading in Luigi's behalf: his mistaken zeal, his belief that the child's moments were numbered, that his act would place her in eternal safety.

"Hush! speak not to me of him. I had told him

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how sacredly I held your child in trust, and through his treachery you have suffered this wrong while your little one was in my keeping. I know you acquit me (for Ben Ezra would have interrupted her); but the deed is not the less done: my pledge is violated,—violated in my own house, and I was powerless to prevent it."

After a few moments' silence, she continued: "I hardly dare inquire for the Signora."

"I wish to take you to her; but I must prepare you for a change. Since our child was torn from us she has shown no consciousness of our loss. She will not know you, and her strength is at the lowest; but you are so associated in her mind with Zillah, that I have a faint hope the sight of you may break the spell which paralyses sense and memory"—

No: neither touch, nor voice, nor Zillah's name pronounced in well-known tones, as clearly as the rising sobs of the Contessa would permit, could effect more than to increase the restlessness of the sufferer; and, with deep disappointment, her husband led their guest from the room.

It was some time before she could recover sufficient composure to speak. At last she said, "I will go fresh from this scene to Castel Gandolfo. I am no favourite with His Holiness; for the Conte had ever a leaning to the liberal policy, and could not change his opinions when the tide turned; but he shall hear me. If he is a man, and they say he is a kind one, he cannot hear unmoved of misery like this."

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She bid her coachman drive with unsparing haste; and it may be that the kind-hearted old Pontiff might have found the eloquence of burning words and passionate feeling irresistible. But, alas, the visit of Dr. Selwyn had put Antonelli on his guard: by his orders all visitors that day to the Pontiff were conducted to himself, to receive his courteous explanation that indisposition prevented His Holiness from receiving them in person.

He received the Contessa Barberini with distinguished courtesy, deprecated her long absence from Court, sheathed in complimentary language to herself some caustic reflections on the political opinions of the late Conte, and finally invited her confidence with bland assurances that any affairs of importance she might have with His Holiness should suffer no delay by passing through his hands.

Not to this man could she pour out the tale of wrong and suffering which well-nigh choked her utterance. She replied coldly, that her communication should wait the convenience of His Holiness, and withdrew.

He had guessed rightly the real object of her visit, for her name had been mentioned both by Dr. Selwyn and by Luigi in connection with the child. An ill-concealed triumph glittered in his eye as the door closed behind her, and he said to himself, "I am better suited to deal with guests like these than the soft-hearted Pontiff."

At first he had been disposed to regard Luigi's

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zeal in making a proselyte with regret, or at least with indifference; but pique at the conduct of the Contessa to himself inclined him to make of the question a more personal affair. He wrote to Luigi to recommend vigilance in the custody of the child, whose place of concealment must by no means be divulged, as her father had influential friends who would interest themselves for her restoration to her family.

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CHAPTER XV.

GIAN'S ADVICE—DEBORAH'S ILLNESS—NIGHT-WATCHES AND THE BOOK—ADRIEL BETRAYS HIMSELF—LIGHT IN GLOOM.

"THE Signora is too kind," said Gian Ferretti, as he stood half irresolutely, with his hand upon the door of the apartment in Villa Palestro, whither he had resorted to take leave of Mrs. Percival and her family. "The Signora is too kind, and her kindness has been to me as a stream in the desert. But the traveller to whom a mission has been entrusted may not linger by the stream. Your humble guests have left you, and my work *here* is done; but my message is to enslaved souls through the length and breadth of my beloved Italy. My working day may not be long: I dare not rest till it is over."

"We must not urge him, Juliet," said Mrs. Percival, turning to her granddaughter. "The Padre will, I hope, remember that he has friends and a refuge here whenever he needs them. But where is Maria? She must not lose this farewell visit."

"I left her but a little while ago, *Nonna mia,* to

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read a letter she had received from her friends in Rome; but I will find her."

There was no need, for Miriam was even now at the door, Adriel's letter crushed in her hands. Perhaps her eyes were too blinded with tears to see the Padre. She came straight to Mrs. Percival, and put the letter before her, seating herself on the ground beside her, and burying her face on her lap while she read it.

Juliet and the Padre marked with alarm the growing distress of the reader: she laid her hand on the head resting on her knee.

"Poor child; poor Maria: this touches you very nearly."

"The Signor Luppino has been a father to me," sobbed Miriam.

"Let me tell it dear child. The Padre Gian is here: he will advise us."

She lifted her head quickly. Gian Ferretti was regarding her with no doubtful expression of friendly concern.

"Yes, Signora; tell it," she said, burying her face again: "it can be, it ought to be, no secret."

Adriel's letter, it will be remembered, was written during the night-watch he shared with his father immediately after his little sister's abduction. It could not therefore report the confession Luigi had to make to Ben Ezra the next morning; but as Gian listened to the details of the letter, and learned that Luigi himself had sent armed men, under a sergeant,

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to the Via Rua, and that the order was signed by the Inquisitor-General, he felt that there was no room for doubt as to the treachery which had been practised upon Ben Ezra. Whoever had perpetrated the deed, he felt sure that the child had actually been baptized; and, alas, his knowledge and experience as a priest taught him how absolute was the power which ecclesiastical law gives to the Church over the baptized children of Jews.

"Appeal is useless," he said: "from the Pontiff downwards it would not be listened to. Bad as the act is, the law protects it; nay, enjoins it. A strong expression of public opinion on the grounds of civil liberty, especially from the English and French Governments, is, under God, the best hope. A case so cruel, and attended with such cruel results, will readily excite sympathy anywhere outside of the Papal Hierarchy.

"And, meanwhile, oh, Signor Padre, her mother will die!" said Miriam, glancing almost reproachfully at the speaker. "Signora, you will let me go to her *to-day?*" pleaded she, fixing her dark wistful eyes on her mother-friend.

"Yes, Maria: it will comfort them. Bernard shall take you."

"And, *Nonna mia*," said Juliet, with a touch of her old feeling about the Ghetto: "the Signora Luppino may need better air than the Via Rua: there is our empty house in the Largo dell' Impresa."

Mrs. Percival smiled brightly on her child, and

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commissioned Miriam to offer it. The two girls withdrew, too much pre-occupied to remember any leave-taking with Gian.

He stood for a few moments absorbed in thought. We have seen that his nature was warm, ardent, susceptible. Had the sight of these fair young creatures, in their simple guileless attachment to each other and to their maternal friend, awakened in him some natural yearnings after hopes and joys from which his self-chosen life of stern self-sacrifice must for ever exclude him? It may have been so, but his resolve had not been taken without counting the cost: the joy set before him could and did outweigh those joys which he had left behind. "I think I have seen the little child who has been torn from her parents," he said: "she came with Signor Luppino on one of his visits to Francesco and Antonio. She peeped shyly into the room which contained his patients, and then bounded off like a young fawn to join the Signorinas in the garden. I saw her but for a moment, but it was a face not easily forgotten."

"And you think there is really no hope?"

"None, that the priests will give her up. Antonelli's policy is ultramontane, and his measures of late have been bitterly, though covertly, hostile to the Jews. It seems heartless advice to give to the bereaved father; but I have been behind the scenes, and I would say, Let him yield to present necessity. The English friend spoken of in the letter may render him great service, by arousing a strong reaction of

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public feeling, expressed in a well-signed protest from England; but the father himself must lull suspicion by present submission to the trial which has befallen him. He must especially guard against any attempts to discover his child's retreat: it would but lead to her being passed from hand to hand, and to her condition becoming harder than it probably now is. The resources of his enemies are boundless: he cannot hope to be a match for them. Signora," he added, "I have spoken as one trained in priest-craft, and have given such advice as my unhappy familiarity with its dealings suggests; but were the bereaved father here, I would say to him, Be silent to man; but cry unto God most high, who performeth all things for thee: to whom nothing is too hard, and who never said to the seed of Jacob, 'Seek ye Me in vain.' Tell him from me, Signora, that his deliverance shall be the subject of my fervent prayer; and that should it be in my power to help him, no personal risk shall prevent the proscribed exile from coming forward to do so. And now farewell."

Mrs. Percival had scarcely finished committing Gian's advice to writing, in a letter full of friendly sympathy to Signor Luppino, when Miriam glided in, pale and tearful, to receive her blessing ere she left Villa Palestro.

"I *lend* you to the Signor Medico, in the hour of his need. But this is your home, Maria: you will return to us, my child."

The blazing sun of August compelled Bernard and

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his charge to wait during the hours of siesta, when, in town and country alike, all labour is suspended. For these hours in Rome the shops and churches are all closed, and the city goes to sleep; those who are compelled to be abroad creeping slowly along in the shadows, and clinging to the walls.

They did not arrive till twilight, when doors are opened, and their netted curtains wave to and fro in the light breeze which breathes through the cooling streets. Entering by the Porto del Popolo, they passed through the Piazza which bears the same name, the most imposing of all the piazzas of Rome, just as the Roman populace were in the full tide of enjoyment of their favourite game "gatta cieca." This game consists in bandaging the eyes of one of the players, who, after being turned round two or three times, endeavours to go blindfold to an appointed goal, on which a prize is placed, and touch it with a stick given him to aid him in his progress, and to enable him to avoid obstacles. The three whirls generally so confuse the notions of the blindfolded person as to his position, that he often makes the most amusing blunders, as he goes groping along in a false direction, exhibiting at times a self-confidence when he is wrong, and a timidity of purpose when he is right, that is exceedingly absurd.*

The gay crowd must be passed through, for it is in the half of the Piazza towards the gate that the

* "Roba di Roma," 255.

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game is played; and the merry-hearted children of Rome bestrode the four Egyptian lions, which lie *couchant* at the base of the ancient obelisk which stood in olden times before the Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis, and under which Moses may once have walked.

Laughter and shouts of merriment filled the air, but Miriam turned away sick at heart. Was she not going to a home whose light had been quenched in darkness?

She left Bernard at the corner of the street, lest the sufferer should be startled at the sound of wheels. Ben Ezra had caught sight of her, and admitted her himself. "The King of Israel bless you, Miriam: this is just the help we needed. But can you bear it that she will not know you?"

She murmured an assent, and was led to Deborah's room.

Ben Ezra ventured to hope that the long gaze with which his wife returned Miriam's greeting, as she held her thin hand in both of her's, was not wholly unconscious; but if so the gleam was but for a moment: she broke off into little waves of soft laughter, which it required all Miriam's self-command to hear unmoved.

A few hours later she was installed for her night-watch, happy in the consciousness that the weary attendants on the invalid could leave her with confidence, to seek such sleep as their ever-present sorrow would permit.

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Miriam had now at length time to collect her thoughts. "My Messiah," she said to herself: "He alone can help." And she cast herself on her knees before Him, to utter in a less broken form the petitions which during the day had been winged messengers to bring needed strength and courage. Many prayers from the devout Jew and his wife had been offered, in that silent chamber, to the God of Israel; but now, for the first time, the "name which is above every name" was pleaded there with prevailing power. Peace stole into Miriam's heart, and a settled conviction that the storm-cloud which had burst over her friends was charged with blessing.

She gazed out into the summer night. All discordant sounds, whether of revelry or strife, were hushed into silence. The city slept quietly under the broad beams of the harvest-moon. Between the houses she caught a glimpse of the restless Tiber, as its yellow waters rolled on, breaking into a thousand fantastic forms the silver ray from heaven. "So it is with her," she said, as she turned to soothe some restless movements of her patient. "But the pure light shines still upon the troubled waters, and my Messiah will say to them one day, 'Peace: be still.'"

She chanted in a low sweet voice a favourite Hebrew melody, and under its soothing influence Deborah's eyelids grew heavy, and her young nurse had the joy of seeing that she slept. She lifted a warning finger as Ben Ezra stole to the half-open

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door. He exchanged with her a glad and grateful glance, and went away again to sleep more soundly himself than he had done since his sorrow.

"What a father he has been to me!" she said, as she listened to the closing of his door." "How I love to be a comfort to him! Ah, if he knew my Messiah, if he would read His tender words, if he would pray to Him!" Miriam drew towards her her treasured New Testament, Mrs. Percival's gift. She had nearly completed, with Juliet, its first perusal; and though she missed the young companion of her study, it was sweet to be, as it were, alone with the Author of the Book,—to look down at the written Word, and then look up to be taught its meaning.

So her night-watch passed away, and in the morning Ben Ezra sent her to seek rest herself, against her urgent entreaty to be allowed to remain with her charge. In pursuance of Gian Ferretti's advice, he had on the previous evening put his cause into the hands of his friend Dr. Selwyn. *His* deep interest in the case would not allow him to act at a distance, and he prepared to make a visit to England, and lay the matter in person before those who by office or influence were in a position to make a successful protest. Ben Ezra meanwhile submitted to the harder task of remaining inactive at home.

When Miriam returned to Deborah's room with noiseless tread, she was surprised to find Signor Luppino still there, contrary to his expressed inten-

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tion of leaving Naomi in charge while he made an early round among his patients.

"The Signora is not worse?" she said, supposing nothing else could have detained him.

He started at her voice, and the colour mounted to his temples, as he seemed half-disposed to hide away the Book which lay open on his knees; but concealment was foreign to his nature, and he said simply,

"I have opened your Book upon an interesting part, Miriam: you must lend it to me again." He looked at his watch, and with an exclamation of surprise left the room.

He had opened it at the folded paper which marked her night-study, and the words which had arrested his attention were these: "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

"And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

He was a student of the Prophets, and such imagery was familiar to him as descriptive of an

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unfaithful Church. But who was here the limner? and who the subject? On the latter point he could be in no doubt: the touches were too life-like to be unrecognized by one who had ever the original before his eyes. But who had drawn the portrait? for its freshness and accuracy it might have been taken yesterday. Was this indeed the Christian's Book? He turned to the title-page: "The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The words grated on Jewish ears; yet he pondered them. The Book claimed to date back 1800 years. He knew the grounds of its claims to antiquity, and was too candid to doubt them; yet what human prescience could have enabled a Jewish exile in the days of Domitian to pourtray thus faithfully the city and hierarchy of Rome? And, besides, what form of Christianity was this which denounced so fearlessly that which professed to be Christian? This was the question he had begun to revolve when Miriam's entrance disturbed his meditations.

She had less difficulty than she expected in dissuading him, on his return to his home, from spending the evening in his wife's apartment. He and Adriel were together in the study: she heard the distant murmur of reading and conversation, and *her Book was missing!*

Her heart beat high with hope, and the prayer was ever on her lips: "Reveal Thyself unto them, oh, my Messiah. Let them find *Thee* of whom Moses in the law and the Prophets did write."

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The studies of father and son were prolonged far into the night. Ben Ezra read onward from the place which had at first arrested his attention. Smarting as he was under the cruel wrong which Rome had inflicted on him, could he do otherwise than respond to the call: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets; for God hath avenged you on her." His heart swelled to the Divine song, so Jewish in its form: "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgments: for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia."

Fascinated with the grandeur of the subject he went on; but the language was soon wrapped in mystery. "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife hath made herself ready." "Which of the heavenly potentates," he asked himself, "is designed under the symbol of the Lamb? and who is the Bride for whom are prepared such high and holy nuptials?" His brow contracted as he found the name of Jesus inwoven with the glorious imagery, and he said to himself firmly, "Hear, oh, Israel, the Lord our God is *one* Lord." "I am the Lord, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another." Yet, as he proceeded, his soul melted within him, when he heard the name of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, "Holy *Jerusalem*, descending out of heaven

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from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." Line by line he traced her fair lineaments to the close of the wondrous description. Had his brightest anticipations of Messiah the Prince, and of his restored nation, ever imaged forth anything half so glorious?

Was not this heavenly betrothal an echo of the words of his own Prophets? It had been the burden of Hosea's song: "I will betroth thee unto Me for ever." And the melodious cadence of his favourite Isaiah responded in the same key: "As the Bridegrom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." But *who* is this? Who in the Christian's Book, under the symbol of "a Lamb," claims the affianced Bride of Israel's Lord and King? *A Lamb!* What could the title suggest to Jewish ears, but the idea of a sacrifice, an atonement, a sin-bearer?

He thought he was threading his own way patiently through the mazes of a difficult question; yet truly, in answer to Miriam's prayer, a ray from heaven was guiding his inquiry. He referred to a marginal reference in her Book, which brought fresh light to bear on the question, "Who is the Lamb?" The scene lay in Bethabara, beyond Jordan. He stood, as it were, beside the Baptist, and heard him say, as he saw Jesus coming unto him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The scales began to fall from his eyes. Could it

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be that there was an august and Divinely-appointed Sacrifice,—the Antitype of all Mosaic types, the Sin-bearer, who, as such, attracted to Himself the lightning of Divine wrath, yet who being Himself infinite was not withered by the stroke?

Yet surely he had Divine warrant for the trust to which he had clung so tenaciously,—that the Messiah for whom he looked was to be a reigning Prince, who should raise his nation from its eighteen centuries of degradation, and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. He could not, at first, recollect that the harp of prophecy, when Messiah was the theme, gave forth any strains but those of triumph and exultation; yet, as he turned over the leaves of his Hebrew Scriptures, his eye rested on the words in the Prophet Daniel: "*Messiah shall be cut off; but not for Himself.*" Was not this the key he was seeking?

All his thoughts and perplexities were shared with Adriel. Under other circumstances he might have shrunk from admitting one so young to questionings which shook to its foundations the fabric of his ancient faith; but he and Adriel were left the solitary remnants of their once happy family circle: they were now all in all to each other, and to his son Ben Ezra could almost think aloud.

The next day was a *festa* in the School of Medicine, and Adriel spent several hours with his mother. Ben Ezra had been a careful guardian of Miriam's secret confession to himself, and it was with unfeigned

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surprise that Adriel saw the Book which had been the subject of his study with his father the night before, open upon her lap as she sat beside his mother.

"*You* reading this Book, Miriam! My father did not give you permission?"

She looked up with an arch smile, and said, "*I* gave *him* permission: the Book is mine."

"Yours!" and his Jewish notions of the spiritual inferiority of women prompted the scarcely courteous answer: "Even a wise man, like my father, finds it beyond his comprehension."

"That may very likely be," said Miriam: "those things which are hidden from the wise and prudent are revealed unto babes."

"You, then, understand this Book?"

"Signor, the sun arises upon the darkness of the night: the sun is in the upper heaven, and I upon the earth. What can I know? Its beams are dazzling. I gaze not upon the pure fount of light; but I feel their warmth: I walk in their light, and am glad. Signor, the Book tells of Him who is the Light of the world. I know it is true; for He has risen upon me, and turned my darkness into day."

"But this is the Book of the priests," said Adriel, more convinced in heart than he chose to allow.

"Nay, Signor: it is the Book which the priests would keep back, lest their people should become too wise." She told him something of Gian's history, though supressing the name.

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He turned the subject: his inward doubts and questionings were as yet sacred to his father. "Did my letter shock you very much, Miriam? Our hearts turned to you in our distress: my little sister loved you dearly."

Miriam's heightened colour, and the tears which rushed unbidden to her eyes, were sufficient answer.

"Did you show the letter to your friends?"

"Forgive me, Signor, that I did so: the Signora has been as a mother to me."

"And the Signorina Morini: did she see it?" How earnestly Adriel tried to speak in a tone of indifference; but the assumed nonchalence was exaggerated, and Miriam looked up and saw two very eager eyes waiting her answer.

"The Signorina heard it first from her grandmother, but she read it for herself before she left Villa Palestro."

"Did it displease her?"

"Displease her, Signor!" said Miriam, with some surprise. "Ah, no: she was full of pity. Nothing that concerns your father's happiness could be indifferent to her: she looks on him as one of her best friends."

"She made no remark on the letter?"

"Let me remember," said Miriam: "I was so bewildered then with the news. She said; but—— the words were not meant for your hearing, Signor."

"Ah! but tell me, Miriam."

"She said, '*Mia cara:* this son will be a great

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comfort to his father. I am glad they have not taken *him* away.'"

Up to this time Miriam had been unsuspicious; but his whole face lighted up so brilliantly at her answer, even in presence of their deepest sorrow, that she would have showed less penetration than girls usually do on such matters, if she had not understood that Juliet's good opinion was of priceless worth to Adriel Luppino.

Adriel was blind enough to suppose his secret was still his own: he had shared it with none but his mother. It made him painfully conscious of her wandering intellect, that this conversation could have taken place in her hearing without awakening any sign of interest. He went and sat beside her: his caresses seemed to soothe and please her, and he mused sadly on the mysterious change which had left form and life and animation; while the intelligent being was gone which had lived and loved as wife, mother, friend. Where was she: this beloved one? Not in the world of spirits; not, as far as any outward evidence went, in the form and lineaments once instinct with her own true self. *Where* was she? would she ever return?

It was not without advantage to Miriam that Adriel had thus unconsciously betrayed his feelings. Her task soon became one of intense and absorbing interest. Her Book was henceforth the daily study both of Ben Ezra and his son, and she was not long excluded from their confidence. On the contrary, it

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was a beautiful sight to see the grey-haired man, of much knowledge and varied experience, appealing with touching simplicity to the young disciple a little in advance of himself; while Adriel, if not a more thoughtful, was a more eager learner than his father. Could it be otherwise than that he should feel warmly and gratefully towards the gentle girl, who was never weary of trying to make him a sharer in all her new-found happiness? And what kindles in us such solicitous affection as prayerful effort for the souls of others, especially if our hearts are warmed and cheered with success. Yes: a strong affection, as of sister for brother, sprang up between these two young hearts,—a love not unmixed with mutual admiration: but how easily might Miriam have mistaken the nature of Adriel's feeling, had she not thus early obtained a glimpse into the shrine of his human affections, and found inscribed there the name of her friend!

He was, however, unconscious, as we have said, that she had thus penetrated his secret. It afforded her some mischievous amusement to see with what dexterity he led the conversation to Villa Palestro: not venturing to mention Juliet's name, but eager for any scraps of information about her; and looking hungry and dissatisfied when Miriam, with provoking coolness, dwelt on the charms of the Signora, on the history of Antonio and Francesco, or the stealthy visits of Gian Ferretti.

It was not, we must admit, a merely mischievous

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spirit which made Miriam reticent. Juliet Morini had for her laid aside her natural reserve, and admitted her to her most intimate confidence; such confidence was sacred, and up to the present time Adriel was even unaware that Juliet's faith had been shaken in the religion of her fathers.

It came out at last however, and it was thus. The Sabbath was over, but the newly awakened allegiance of Adriel and his father to Jesus of Nazareth, caused them to observe with reverence the day on which He rose from the dead. Ben Ezra had patients who required his attention, but Adriel was spending the morning in his mother's room, while Miriam read in low tones, which seemed to have a quieting effect on the invalid, the words of her Lord: "He that loveth father or mother more than Mé is not worthy of Me."

"Stop, Miriam;" he said: "I cannot bear it yet."

"But *you* have not to choose, Signor Adriel, between your father and your Lord; your father leads the way: our nation will never blame you for following one so wise and good."

"No, no: it is not that," he said. "But if I am to be a Christian, I must be a Christian of the Book. I can believe that Jesus is the Christ, that He is One with the Father, that He became man, that as the Lamb of God He took away the sins of the world. All this I can believe, but I cannot join myself to the worshippers of a woman; why, but

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now I hear that the Pope and all the Cardinals are trying to prove that she was born, like her Divine Son, pure and spotless: this I cannot believe. I cannot bow down before images: I can never look but with abhorrence on the cruelty which has made me motherless and sisterless. This Roman Church was hateful to me when I was a Jew, it is more hateful to me as a Christian."

"But who, Signor Adriel, speaks of any thing so terrible, so unnatural as your joining this Romish Church?"

"Miriam, we have spoken freely of our deepest holiest feelings, but there is one I have shared only with my mother: ah, if she could share it now! Will you take her place? I love Juliet Morini! My new faith removes me as far from her as the old, yet not even to smooth my way to her, can I adopt the hateful creed in which she has been reared. Say the words again, Miriam, I can bear them now: 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.'"

Miriam looked her astonishment; she could hardly believe that in her care to guard her friend's confidence she had revealed so little, as to leave Adriel in ignorance that Juliet had been a fellow-learner with herself; and that though she had not as yet separated herself by any overt act from the faith in which her father died, yet that she too was, like himself, a "Christian of the Book."

Even her scruples as to betraying her friend could

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not prevail to keep her silent now. Adriel in his joy and thankfulness folded his poor unconscious mother in his arms, and said, "Mother, mother: Juliet Morini will be mine yet!" The sanguine ardour of youth could think no other difficulty insuperable, if he shared a common faith with her whom he loved.

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CHAPTER XVI.

ENGLISH PROTEST — APPARENT CONCESSIONS — A CRUEL FRAUD — HOPES RISE — BITTER DISAPPOINTMENT.

"YOU have done well, my son, in answering thus promptly to my summons. There are yet, however, a few papers over which I must cast my eye, ere I can attend to the business on which I desired to see you. Be seated, and employ yourself meanwhile in looking at the signatures appended to this protest."

So saying, the Cardinal Secretary of State pushed towards the Padre Luigi di Sforza a document of formidable dimensions. It was a protest addressed to the Papal Government on behalf of Zillah Luppino and her parents, and signed by the mayors and provosts of nearly a hundred British cities, by more than twenty dignitaries of the Church of England, by a large number of peers, members of Parliament, and heads of colleges, as well as by hundreds of laymen of standing and influence. The protest rested on the broad basis of the natural rights of humanity, and the infringement of those rights which had been practised in the abduction of an infant child from the care and

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guardianship of her parents. The protest was couched throughout in the courteous language due to the head of Church and State in Italy, but it expressed two unqualified requests: first, "that the parents should be allowed free access to their child;" secondly, that "though the act of baptism could not be recalled, yet that in consideration of the child being an involuntary recipient of the same, a dispensation should be granted by His Holiness, empowering the Cardinal Vicar to restore the child to her parents till she was of age to make a rational choice between the religion of her nation and that of the Church of which she was an unconscious member."

Luigi read these words with contracted brows. "Private judgment!" he said. "This child is to be allowed at her will to reject the grace so signally offered to her by the Holy Mother of God herself."

At this moment Antonelli pushed aside his papers, and turned his chair half round, so as to face his guest. He crossed one slippered foot over the other, laid his hands upon his knees, and, somewhat bending his head, as if in the attitude of thought, fixed a penetrating look on the young Jesuit. We cannot tell whether it was by accident or design that his own face was turned from the light, while it shone full on the features of Luigi di Sforza.

"This dog of a Jew," he said, "has been crafty beyond my expectations. I thought he had accepted his fate, while it seems he has been raising an outcry against us through the length and breadth of England.

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I was waited on this morning by an English gentleman, who handed to me this protest, which he has, it appears, made it his business to obtain; and he volunteered some supplementary information of his own as to the state of public feeling in England, and the hostility we shall raise against the Holy See if the protest does not take effect. I promised that the affair should have my best attention, but I can foresee that these English will not take a refusal so quietly as does our friend the French Minister, who, under instructions from Paris protests and entreats, but is tolerably indifferent to his ill success."

"What does our Holy Father the Pope say to the English protest?"

"It is my privilege," said Antonelli, while the sardonic smile which Luigi knew and hated, passed over his features, and lingered for a moment in his eye, "to interpose my shield of office between His Holiness and these painful questions. I act in them, under his general authorization."

"And what, if I may venture to ask, are your own intentions?" said Luigi, coldly. "The terms of the protest are precise."

"Just so: and it may not be well at the present time to bid entire defiance to public opinion so generally expressed. England is jealous for religious freedom, and there are plenty of restless spirits among us who would prove as tinder to the match. The demands of the protest must be met by apparent concessions."

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"*Apparent* concessions?" said Luigi, doubtfully.

"Listen," said his Eminence: "the thing is simple enough. You are the practical guardian of this child. The sisters of the Tor di Specchi will act at your bidding. You will visit her to-day: you find she is out of spirits and health; you prescribe for her a change into the country. The convent has a villa at Alatri, at which the nuns usually spend part of the summer. You can take her there yourself this afternoon, with some of the sisters. To-morrow I will send through this Englishman, to Luppino and his wife, a permission to visit their child at the Tor di Specchi. I know the condition of the lady, but they will risk everything in the hope of arousing her. They will take her to the convent. The nuns will find the permission *en régle*, but the child being at Alatri, cannot be produced. They will send the father on there. His wife could not bear a journey of some hours. If he attempts to take her with him, so much the worse for them both; for *you* will receive him, and will find that his permission only extends to an interview with his child at the Tor di Specchi. You are too scrupulous to overstep your instructions. You cannot tell what reasons your superiors may have had for giving the Tor di Specchi as the rendezvous. The Signor Luppino must apply to me for a fresh order. I am, however, myself about to obtain a short respite from toil. Ministers of State must rest as well as other men. I shall not be forthcoming, and my delegate in office will not care

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to intermeddle in a case of some delicacy. The father must curb his impatience, and submit to some delay. The English agitator will meanwhile have communicated the success of the protest as to its first requirement. For the second, *piano piano* is the practice of our courts, and a hint from high quarters that the case is not one which needs dispatch, will be enough to prolong it indefinitely."

While Antonelli unfolded his plan, gloom deepened on the noble features of Luigi di Sforza. "Has your Eminence considered," he said, "the part you would assign to me? For the sake of our holy religion, I have crushed within my breast the feelings of humanity which pleaded for these parents in the loss of their innocent child; but would you have me lend myself to a cruelty so refined? Shall I take part in a practical fraud? Shall I send the agonized father on what I know to be a bootless errand? It is my vocation to uphold and disseminate the truth. Shall I stoop to act a lie?"

The astute politician felt a degree of compassion, bordering on contempt, for the man who could place the interests of truth in the scale against the success of a well-conceived plot; but he took in at a glance the position of his hearer, and knew how to accommodate himself to it.

"Beware, my son, of listening to the voice of the Tempter, disguished as an angel of light; and presume not to exercise your private judgment as to that which shall promote our sacred religion. As

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the delegate of His Holiness, I require your submission."

"Are these indeed the commands of our Holy Father?" said Luigi.

"He acts through me," answered Antonelli, evasively. "Consider, too, my son, how mis-placed are your scruples. You plead for these parents, because, thanks to the ill-timed zeal of their friends in England, they must suffer some disappointment; but have you forgotten that by your own act this child has exchanged the base parentage of an accursed race, for adoption into the household of the holy Catholic faith? Would you see her torn from this ark of safety, and flung back to perdition? Would you rob the Holy Mother of God of the child whom she received with such marked tokens of her favour, to satisfy the natural affection of these unbelieving parents! Say, my son, to whom must the child be denied: to them, or to our Holy Mother? Both claim her: whose claim will you uphold? For what reason," continued his Eminence, "does our holy faith separate her ministering sons from the joys of domestic life, but that they may learn to devote their whole allegiance to our lady? I will not believe of you, my son, that you can hesitate to lay down at her bidding, and in her sacred cause, every rebellious impulse of natural feeling. To you she has committed this trust, from you she will require it."

A bystander might have noticed the half-amused look on the countenance of the Minister of State, as

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he observed the success of his efforts to bring to bear upon his harassed auditor, motives so foreign to his own habits of thought. Luigi's expressive features bore witness to the struggle passing within. At last he said, "Your Eminence reminds me of my duty of unquestioning obedience. I submit, and lay my conscience in the hands of my spiritual superiors."

"It is well, my son. Our Holy Mother will see and reward the sacrifice. And now, farewell."

Luigi had no wish to prolong the interview. It cost him hours of bitter conflict before he could persuade his moral sense to accept the distorted view of duty imposed on him; yet he could not and would not draw back, and the afternoon of the day saw him on his way with Zillah, the sister Monica, two other nuns, and several of the children of the convent, to the villa at Alatri. They travelled by *vetturino*, and were glad to pursue their journey by night, rather than encounter the sultry heat of the next day. It was with a strange mixture of feelings that the young priest took the sleeping child in his arms, and folded her closely there, as she buried her innocent face in his sombre vestments. "My child, my child," he said, "what hast thou not cost me?"

About the time that Luigi and his companions were entering Alatri, an official from the Court arrived at the residence of Dr. Selwyn, and committed to his own hands the permission, duly signed by the Cardinal Secretary of State on behalf of His Holiness, to Signor Luppino, to present himself with

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his wife, at the Tor di Specchi, and there obtain the long desired sight of his child. Such prompt success was beyond the hopes of the English physician. He had calculated on a delay of at least several days, and had determined not to let his friend Luppino know of his return to Rome, till he could inform him as to the result of the protest.

Joyfully now he bent his way to the Via Rua; and as he threaded the Via del Monte Tarpeio, a narrow alley almost opposite the convent of the Tor di Specchi, and which leads up to the foot of the Tarpeian rock, it was with the bounding step of one who bears good news.

Ben Ezra was at home; and before a word had been spoken on either side, he had read the language of hope in the fervent grasp of his friend's hand, and the gladness that sparkled in his eye.

Dr. Selwyn placed in his hand the precious paper, with its official signature.

Here was an answer to all his agonized surmises as to where his child had been secreted. Sometimes, with ingenious self-torture, he had imagined her in the carefully concealed convent of the Farnesiani nuns, generally known as the *Sepolte Vive,* whose inmates are never seen again after once they assume the black veil, though they are allowed to leave the terrible question in suspense for a double term of noviciate. They never hear anything of the outer world, even of the deaths of their nearest relations; and over the door is an inscription bidding all who

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enter to leave all worldly thoughts behind them. Compared with this living grave, he could hear with gratitude and relief of the Tor di Specchi, renowned for its cheerful aspect and its spacious garden, and acceptable to himself above all, for its nearness to his own abode.

To thank the friend who had brought him so much comfort in any more intelligible way than repeatedly grasping his hand, was impossible; but the necessity for immediate action restored his self-command, and hastily passing his hand over his eyes, he found words to say, "The distance is short, doctor: you shall decide whether she may safely attempt it."

The decision was given in her favour; and for the first time since the terrible change which had befallen her, Deborah passed the threshold of her house.

The motion of the carriage produced a degree of excitement which it required the united efforts of her husband and his friend to calm; and before they were aware, the carriage had drawn up at the convent gates. Dr. Selwyn remained with the invalid, while Luppino sought an entrance, and presented his permission.

He was admitted into the first hall, with its paintings of ancient frescoes; but he saw nothing, heard nothing: his ear was tuned only to one sound,—the expected pattering of childish feet along the corridor.

But it was a soft and measured foot-fall which shortly approached, and before he could well recall his thoughts from their fond imaginings, he found

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himself in the stately presence of the Mother Superior of the convent. She held in her hand the permission, with its ostentatious signature.

"I am sorry to disappoint you, Signor Medico Luppino," she said, stiffly (for was he not a Jew?), "but our young catechumen Beatrice is in villegiatura at our summer villa in Alatri."

"Away? not in Rome? God of Israel, give me patience! Only this day have I discovered her hiding-place. She was torn from our arms at night. The crushing sorrow has reduced her mother to idiocy; but I hoped much, much from the sight of our child. My wife is even now at the convent gates. Lady, you are not deceiving me? These walls do not hold my lost babe?" and he fixed a look of searching scrutiny on the face of the Abbess.

"No, indeed, Signor," said she, for the woman in her was stirred at the sight of his distress. "Even could I find it in my heart to do so, this permission bears to me the authority of a command."

The unhappy father could only inquire the position of the villa in Alatri belonging to the convent, that he might lose no time in presenting himself there. He again alluded to the unhappy position of his wife, and asked whether the child could not be sent for back to Rome; but the Abbess declined to assume this responsibility, stating that the movements of the child were regulated by her guardian. Luppino's heart sank within him, as she named the Padre Luigi di Sforza.

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He attempted to ply the Abbess with questions, but she was reserved in giving information. "Beatrice was," she said, "little under her own eye, as the sister Monica took the sole charge of her. She was with her at Alatri, and from her Signor Luppino would hear all that he wished to know."

Still half stunned with his disappointment, he returned to Dr. Selwyn, whose sympathy, unavailing as it was, gave him some little comfort, especially as it contrasted with Deborah's terrible unconsciousness, who was finding vent for the excitement occasioned by the drive, in repeated peals of laughter.

As they returned, Dr. Selwyn said, "Miriam Costello is still with you?"

"Thank God, she is! No daughter could have been more devoted. The story is too long now to tell you of all that we owe to her."

"I fear this Monsignor Frascatari is again in Rome."

"Impossible! he was to be away till late in the autumn."

"Nevertheless, I saw him, or I am much mistaken, pass by in his carriage as we waited at the convent gates; and our *cocchiére*, of whom I inquired, confirmed my suspicion."

"If it is indeed so," said Ben Ezra, "Miriam must return to her refuge among her friends. No selfish consideration shall induce me to expose her to danger."

And full as his heart was of grief and disappointment, he lost no time in making inquiries, which

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placed the fact beyond doubt. He said nothing to Miriam herself, but before he left Rome for Alatri, a letter was posted to Mrs. Percival, requesting her to receive her young protegée back at Villa Palestro.

Only for Miriam's safety, however, could he brook even a slight delay, and the afternoon of the same day saw him posting with all speed to Alatri. What were to him the fatigue and the cost of a rapid journey, with the hope of seeing his little Zillah at its close!

The feelings of the Padre Luigi were anything but enviable, as he paced a sequestered walk of the villa early on the next morning. He calculated on the father's impatience, and felt sure that before the day was out, he should be called to confront his visitor. He regarded him with feelings akin to those of a criminal who waits a summons from his judge.

We cannot dwell upon the scene which followed, when at length the *cocchiére* drew rein at the convent gates, and his panting horses stood covered with foam and dust, while the impatient traveller rung sharply at the bell of the convent villa. Indignant as the tortured father felt at Luigi's persistent refusal to overlook the slight informality of the meeting taking place at Alatri instead of Rome, there was yet a dejection in the whole manner of the young Jesuit, which led Ben Ezra to suppose he was acting under compulsion. He determined to try whether he could obtain any justice from the Governor of Alatri; and hastily quitting the villa, he crossed the piazza

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of the town to the palace of the Governor, which is on one side of the square.

To his surprise, he found the whole piazza full of an excited and fanatical populace, and a number of priests walking up and down among them. He was directed to mount the stairs to the Governor's apartment, where, instead of the redress he had hoped to find, he saw that his cause was already prejudged. "You are come here to see your child, but you must not see her. You had leave from his Eminence to see her in Rome, but not here." Luppino mentioned Monsignor the Bishop of the town as one to whom he would appeal, but was met by the cruel answer, "Monsignor requires you should leave the town immediately, and you must do so."

Feeling that all was in vain, he went in despair to the inn to seek his carriage. A friendly person stole up to him, and said, "Leave this place as soon as you can. The priests have told the people that you are come here *to murder your own child, because she has become a Christian.* That is the reason why they are so wild and excited. Leave, then, quickly, for your life is in danger." Luppino took the hint, and in a few minutes was pursuing his desolate journey from Alatri to Rome.

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CHAPTER XVII.

HOPE DEFERRED MAKETH THE HEART SICK—THE LOST ONE FOUND—AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT.

THREE weary weeks of waiting had passed since Ben Ezra returned from Alatri. Time after time as he presented himself at the office of the Minister of State, the answer was still the same: "His Eminence has not yet returned." He had visited again the Abbess at Tor di Specchi, but he found her cold and uncommunicative, she "had no authority to say when the villegiatura of the Sister Monica and her charge would be over." It was a hard case for the exercise of patience, but patience seemed his only resource.

In other respects, however, the three weeks had been eventful: he had himself taken the reluctant Miriam to her friends and her refuge at the villa Palestro. The warmth with which Mrs. Percival and Juliet shared in his sorrows, tempted him to reveal to them, at least to the former, the inward conflicts which had shaken to its very foundation his religious belief as a Jew. That Miriam, her own child in the faith, should have been used as an

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instrument in his enlightenment, was to Mrs. Percival an added joy, and Ben Ezra's remaining difficulties seemed to melt away in the clear calm sunlight which ever shone around her childlike and happy spirit.

His struggles for submission to trials so heartrending as those which had befallen him, touched her inexpressibly. She longed to show her sympathy in a more effectual form than in mere words, and after consultation with her grandchild, she urged him to try the effect on Signora Luppino of a complete change of air and scene by removing her to their villa, where, as she said, "Maria could continue in her office as nurse, while he and his son could spend any time there, which their engagements in Rome left at their disposal."

The generous offer was made with such an evident desire that it should be accepted, that Luppino returned to Rome cheered with the kindness of his friends, and promising to bring his wife on the first day that her strength appeared to warrant her undertaking the short journey. At the time of which we write, she had already been a fortnight at the villa, an object of general care and attention. Juliet claimed her right to share in the duties of nursing: sometimes with Miriam, sometimes alone, she spent many hours in the chamber of the patient.

Adriel had hitherto been kept a close prisoner to Rome, by preparation for an examination in his medical studies. On his first day of freedom he

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availed himself joyfully of Mrs. Percival's general invitation: what more natural than his eagerness to see again his afflicted mother?

Mrs. Percival led the way to her room, thinking to find Miriam there: but the low sweet song was not her's. The door was open to admit a cooler air, and passing round a screen unheard and unobserved, Adriel beheld in close and watchful attendance upon his mother Juliet Morini. To induce her to take food had been a perplexity throughout her illness, and long and patiently had Miriam often held the spoon to the closed lips; but a low plaintive song of Juliet's seemed to act on her like a spell, and the sweet singer fixed a wistful and tender gaze on the wasted features of her patient, as she marked with quiet satisfaction the fast emptying cup.

He stood entranced. Were his brightest hopes to be realized? was the beautiful girl whom he loved, already acting a daughter's part to his suffering mother?

It was natural that she should start as she turned to put down the cup, and saw her grandmother and Adriel standing in the door-way; but her manner as she came forward to greet him was simple and easy, and it was plain that Miriam had guarded his secret well,—better than he was likely to guard it himself, unless he could school his open and ingenuous countenance to betray less of the homage and admiration which filled his heart.

He tried to thank her for her attentions to his

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mother, but all the ease and frankness were wanting which made his society so charming to Miriam. Juliet attributed his embarrassment to filial grief stirred by the sad sight before him; Mrs. Percival was keener witted, and mentally resolved that the young gentleman's intercourse with her child should be carefully watched by herself; not that she shared in the common prejudice against his Jewish lineage: the race which could claim kinship with the human nature of her Lord was in her eyes ennobled, even in its present outcast condition, above that of every other human family; but Adriel was to her almost a stranger, and, in her opinion, quite too young and untried either to entertain or to inspire the feelings of which she thought she saw suspicious tokens.

After a few minutes she withdrew, taking her grandchild with her, and Adriel remained behind waiting on his mother; but his thoughts were not wholly occupied either by the cruel past, or the painful present. Hope can live on meagre diet, and he framed his visions for the future with little thought of the difficulties which might lie in his way.

A few hours later Adriel and Miriam were engaged in earnest conversation in a deep and leafy grove within the grounds of the villa, which afforded complete shelter from the rays of the sun, as well as the privacy they desired; here, in low tones, Adriel was sharing his inmost thoughts with his friend and instructress. A rustling among the bushes attracted their notice, and they suspended their conversation

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to watch whether some animal had not strayed into the grove. Miriam heard herself addressed as "Signorina da Costa" in a low voice, which she recognized at once to be that of Gian Ferretti.

"Pardon, Signorina, but my business is urgent. I must not be seen at the villa: will it be possible for me to obtain an interview with the Signora?"

Miriam thought a moment. "She is probably now in the garden-house," she said; "she has taken her siesta there lately: you can reach it by the grove. Come with me, Signor Padre."

She left him for a few moments when they gained the little path which led from the grove to the garden-house. "Remain here," she said: "I will make sure that there are none to observe your movements."

Gian gazed after the graceful white-robed form as it passed quickly up the grassy path, and he seemed to answer to some thought which had occupied him before he accosted her.

"It is well," he said to himself: "shall I grudge the happiness to another which can never be mine."

She reappeared, and beckoned to him, and in another minute he was alone with Mrs. Percival.

"Tell me, Signora,—your conscience has never been perverted like mine with human sophistries,—can a man be called dishonest for seizing again that of which he has been robbed?"

"To what, Signor Padre, does your question tend?"

"I will tell you. You honour this Jewish physician

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with your friendship: I would show him kindness for his own sake, I will do it still more for your's. I believe I have discovered the hiding-place of his little girl. She will never be restored to him: he must *take*, by fraud or by force, that which will never be *given*."

"By *fraud*, Signor Padre? will you revert to the principle you have abjured,—that the end sanctifies the means?"

"Nay, but listen to me. In my life as a Romish priest I made many preaching expeditions in Lent. I learnt to know the places,—thank God they are not universal even in my poor fallen Church,—where the shepherd eats the fat and clothes himself with the wool, but has no care for the flock; such shepherds are glad to devolve their work on any who will rid them of the burden. Communicating with them by letter and under a disguised name (God forgive me if I have erred), I have taken for them the duties of the confessional: it has been a choice occasion for pointing stricken souls to the blood which cleanses from all sin."

He paused, for Mrs. Percival had put her hand to her head and seemed for a few moments lost in her thoughts: shall we read them? They were these: "This use of the confessional under an assumed name is one against which my own conscience would remonstrate, but I can well believe that, brought up as he has been in a system where habitually the end is thought to justify the means, he can act thus

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without awakening any compunctious visitings: am I bound to let in the full ray of truth upon eyes which are becoming slowly accustomed to the daylight? I may not feel justified in *saying* to him, as the prophet did to Naaman when he sought permission to bow in the house of Rimmon, 'Go in peace;' but I may surely leave him in His hands who has already chased away so many of the shades of error, and is turning his darkness into light." Apparently her mind found rest in the conclusion, for taking her hand from her eyes, and meeting Gian's inquiring look, she motioned to him to proceed.

"My stay in each place has been short. I have not risked detection by waiting to water the seed sown, I have left it to the rain and dews sent from heaven by the great Husbandman. About a week ago I came to Alatri." Mrs. Percival started.

"Ah, Signora! you know the place?"

"I know only too well, Signor Padre, what has happened there." She then related the story of Ben Ezra's double disappointment at the Tor di Specchi and at Alatri. It was Gian's turn to start when she told of Luppino's interview with Luigi di Sforza.

"*He* was there: he is perhaps there still?"

"No: he returned to Rome the next day."

"It is well. It would be hard to elude vigilance like his: the Rector is a man of another sort; I have twice already taken his place at the confessional. Yesterday, after having given to several penitents

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consolation and advice which must have sounded strangely in their ears, a woman knelt before me: she was a nun of the Tor di Specchi sisterhood. Her conscience seemed to be heavily weighed down by something she desired to confess; it was only after much encouragement she could be prevailed on to unburden her grief. At last from her broken words I gleaned the following facts. She said—

"'Father, I have erred: it is my fault, it is my very great fault. Our mother has given into my charge a little Jewish child, only lately baptised and brought into our holy religion. It is my duty to instruct her in the faith; but surely the Evil One fights hard for the child, who is but a babe, and causes her to resist all my efforts. In vain have I hung at her side a rosary blessed by our Holy Father himself, she can see in it nothing but a toy: her Ave Maria she will not repeat. "Why do I not speak," she asks, "to the great God of Israel?" Yet could you see her! Such beauty: such winning ways! and she loves me and I love her,—oh, how much! She thinks I am nursing her till her sick mother is well. Father, it was my duty to put her "*in penitence*," it was my duty to report her to my superior, and I have not done it. I have done worse: it is my fault, it is my great fault; I have given false statements to her guardian, the Padre Luigi di Sforza: he believes that she is learning with a child's docility that which I am appointed to teach her.'

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"This was the substance of her confession, Signora; and when it was told, the kind-hearted sister wept, and said, 'Let my penance be heavy, father, it is right; but do not bid me expose the child, or hand her over to discipline or disgrace. She is so young: let me try to win her by love.'

"Signora, you can believe the deep attention with which I listened to her tale. Who could the little Jewish child be but Signor Luppino's lost babe? I thought I should bring to you and to him the news of her hiding-place, but this I find you know already. He has done well in yielding to necessity, and making no further effort to see his child at Alatri. As far as I can ascertain, no special precautions are thought necessary for her safe keeping. But I must return to my interview with the nun. She told me her name,—'Sister Monica.' I exonerated her from any necessity of confessing her duplicity till I had myself seen and spoken with the child. Yesterday (Tuesday) I received Sister Monica's confession; on Friday she will confess again; and before doing so, she will bring the child to me in the vestry.

"Signora, this is my plan. Tell me not, I entreat you, that the God of truth cannot bless it. The little one, they call her Beatrice; but that is not her real name?"

"No: her real name is Zillah."

"Ah, yes: I think I had heard it. Zillah has, I believe, a brother?"

"Yes: a young man in the School of Medicine."

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"And she knows the Signorina da Costa?"

"Yes, and loves her warmly."

"This is well. The vestry at Alatri has an anteroom, with a second entrance open only to the priest: here I will station the Signorina da Costa and the young man."

"His name is Adriel."

Gian bowed. "I will have disguises ready: for Adriel, that of one of the *Frati;* for the Signorina, that of a nun of the Tor di Specchi. While I am with my penitent, they will show themselves to the child (who will have been left in the vestry), not at first in their disguise, lest they should startle her; but they will assume it as soon as they have made her understand they are about to take her to her mother. The Signorina will have brought for Zillah one of her former dresses. She is now habited as a neophyte of the convent. She will then leave the church by the private door with the child. Should any peasants be lingering about, they will suppose her to be a sister of the convent, taking the air with one of the lay-pupils. Adriel will follow, after a short interval. His hood will effectually conceal him. He will gain upon them without exciting attention; and at the thicket which skirts the road within a short distance of the church, a carriage will be in readiness to convey them to some rendezvous near enough to Rome for the mother to be brought there to see her child. Rome itself they must not enter: the experiment would be too hazardous; and

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the sooner the child can be removed beyond the States of the Church, the better for her safety. Say, Signora—your conscience is tender and pure,—can you approve my plan?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Percival, thoughtfully; "since direct appeal has failed, and you are but restoring that which has been violently taken away. Nor will you now, should your effort be crowned with success, be instrumental in removing the child from one system of false teaching to another; for God, who is wonderful in working, has made to this afflicted father the valley of Achor to become a door of hope. He had never despised Jesus of Nazareth, but he has now learnt to adore Him as the Son of God, and to cling to Him as his only hope."

"Thrice blessed then, has been his trouble; and He who sent it may now be about to remove it. Have you heard lately if there is any improvement in the condition of the poor lady, his wife?"

"Ah, you do not know? The Signora Luppino is here. The Signor Medico has thus shown his confidence in my care, and in the air of our Alban hills."

Gian was touched with admiration at this fresh instance of the open heart and hand of the English lady to the sons and daughters of his own Italy.

"God has surely put this in your heart, Signora. Then it is to this hospitable home that the Signorina da Costa may bring the rescued child, should our endeavour prosper?"

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"Certainly, if you think it a sufficiently safe retreat. My servants, I believe, I can answer for. They are all either Protestant, or strongly attached to their employers. But you asked after the condition of the Signora Luppino. Were her husband any one but a physician, I would try and prepare him for the worst. Since her removal here, she is becoming daily quieter. The poor eyes which used to wander so restlessly, are now for many hours in the day closed in a dreamy sleep; but I believe that the lamp has nearly burnt itself out, and that her power to rally from the shock she has sustained, is well-nigh gone."

"Ah, Signora, what if the recovery of her child should prove the cordial heaven has yet in reserve! But I speak as if all were done. There is hazardous work before us. I must not linger now: there is much to prepare. None must know of my visit: let there be no suspicion of communication between Alatri and the villa Palestro. You will send to this young man—this Adriel,—and instruct him in the part he has to play?"

"You can see him if you will, Signor Padre: he is here to-day."

"Was it then he whom I saw with the Signorina da Costa?" said Gian, quickly.

"Yes: they are old friends, and Maria has been his teacher in the faith."

"And now they have much to say to each other," said Gian, dryly.

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"I never heard of their being more than friends, Signor Padre: I could wish they were so," said Mrs. Percival, as she thought of Juliet.

The young priest made no further remark; and as Mrs. Percival was not studying his countenance, its expression was lost upon her. On inquiring the time, however, he thought it better to leave the instruction of Adriel in her hands; and he disappeared through the grove, without meeting any one to whom he was known.

In the evening of the same day, Mrs. Percival gathered round her in her private sitting-room, Juliet, Miriam, and Adriel, to share with them the important communication of the Padre Gian Ferretti. Now, for the first time, Juliet saw Adriel to advantage. His thoughts were completely drawn out of himself by this new hope for his parents and his sister. He was no longer shy and embarrassed, but calm, trustful, and courageous. She could not but admire the mixture of humility and self-reliance with which he prepared to execute his hazardous task. Once only he aroused Mrs. Percival's vigilance, when he turned to her grandchild, with moistened eyes, and said, "The Signorina, too, will pray that this great deliverance may not fail, by being trusted to unskilful hands?" Juliet's pleasant answer of encouragement was treasured in his heart.

Within the next forty-eight hours, Mrs. Percival and Juliet had to learn by experience that to watch and wait is harder than to act. There had been

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little to do beyond making such arrangements for the journey as would best disguise its real object. In these Adriel proved skilful beyond his years. Signora Luppino's increasing weakness had made it only natural on the Friday morning to summon her husband; and Mrs. Percival could perceive by the expression of his countenance as he counted the patient's languid and fluttering pulse, that she had no need to communicate to him her fears.

Evening deepened into night, but none talked of retiring to rest. Mrs. Percival had in the afternoon admitted the servants of the villa to her confidence; and their unfeigned delight at the possible restoration of the lost child to its parents, left no room to doubt that the secret would be safe in their hands.

Hours passed on: the midnight chimes had long struck, and suspense to the watchers would have become unbearable, had they not again and again sought the peace which is vouchsafed to those whose minds are stayed on God.

Mrs. Percival resisted alike the authority of her physician and the entreaties of her child, that she would take the rest which at her advanced age she could ill afford to lose; but, beyond occupying a sofa in the chamber of her guest, she would not hear of the night's requirements.

Juliet sat beside her, her eyes wandering from the sweet calm face to the pale and shadowy form on the bed, over which Signor Luppino hung with such fond solicitude.

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"The God of our fathers grant that there may be no long delay," he said, as he took his fingers for the twentieth time off the worn and slender wrist. "Signora, Signorina, help me with your prayers!" He knelt and prayed as one who had power with God; and at the close of his prayer, he bowed his head upon his hands, and said solemnly and fervently, "for Jesus' sake."

"For Jesus' sake," echoed the sufferer. She not unfrequently caught and repeated the last words of anything uttered in her hearing; yet to hear this name on her lips—a name now so sacred to her husband—sent a strange thrill of joy to his heart.

Stillness again fell upon the party, as they strained their ears to catch the distant sound of wheels. They shortly heard, not wheels, but footsteps, and sounds as of muffled voices in the entrance. A few moments more, and Bernard had beckoned Signor Luppino from the room; and ere Mrs. Percival could rise from her sofa, Miriam was at her side, and flung her arms round her.

"It is all right, *Signora mia:* she is in her father's arms."

Adriel's forethought had dismissed the *cocchiére* at a small empty house unconnected with the Villa Palestro, and this functionary went away concluding that he had brought back from their villegiatura a young Signor and Signora, with their child. When the carriage was out of hearing, Adriel took his sister (who was sleeping profoundly in Miriam's arms), and

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by the help of a key to the grounds which he had brought with him, he let himself and Miriam in at the back gate near the house, whence they gained the entrance unseen and unheard.

Mrs. Percival and Juliet reached the hall. There sat the father, apparently unconscious of the servants, and their suppressed exclamations of delight. His arms were wreathed fondly, firmly round his recovered darling. The cloak Adriel had thrown around her, as well for concealment as for protection from the night air, had fallen open; but the deep, quiet sleep of innocence and infancy was still unbroken, and Ben Ezra gazed on and on, as if he could never take his fill of such unutterable happiness.

But the sweet lips, slightly parted, were too tempting, and the passionate kiss which he sealed upon them, concentrating in its eagerness the agony of the last parting and the bliss of the present meeting, broke the spell of slumber. The little one opened her eyes, and as she looked up into her father's face, they kindled with joy and meaning.

"*Padre mia*, is it you? Good Miriam, she brought me back: where is she? and brother Adriel? And where is my own mamma? Take me to her, please. What place is this?" said she, fairly roused now, and flinging her little arms round his neck. "Please, *Padre mio*, take me to mamma."

A pang shot through Luppino's soul, as he thought of that meeting.

"Can my little girl be very gentle with her own

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mamma? She is ill in bed, perhaps too ill to take any notice of her." But he rose, and beckoning to his friends to follow, he bore the child to her mother's room.

Her eyes were closed. He placed the little one on Miriam's knee, at the foot of the bed, and bade Adriel hold the lamp so as to light up plainly the features of his child. Stepping then to his wife, he took her hand, and her weary eyes unclosed. They did not as usual roam about the room. Listlessly at first, but quietly, they rested on the eager face which shone under the lamp. A flush crept over the pale cheek. But little Zillah's patience was exhausted, and slipping from Miriam's knee, she sprung upon her mother's bed, and covered her face with kisses.

"Mamma, mamma: my own mamma!"

The suspense was terrible to the bystanders; but after a few moments Deborah uttered a cry of joy, and flung her feeble arms around her child.

It was a long, fond, conscious embrace; but the worn-out body could not keep pace with the awakening intellect, and she relapsed into one of the deep swoons which had marked the commencement of her illness.

Miriam carried off the little one to the room shared by herself and Juliet; and when the childish grief had been soothed of not being allowed to remain with "her own mamma," she was soon wrapped in the sleep which had been broken on her arrival.

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Then followed a long whispered conversation between the friends, in which Juliet exacted full details of all that had happened to Maria (or Miriam, as she was now beginning to call her) since she set off with Adriel on their perilous enterprise. If Miriam made much of Adriel's share in it, and little of her own, we must attribute it to her humility. Mrs. Percival would scarcely have liked to know what a hero he had been made to appear in the eyes of her grandchild.

At last, however, even this theme came to an end, or rather had to yield to the claims nature begun to to assert, and shortly before sunrise silence and sleep reigned in the chamber.

Meanwhile Adriel watched with his father the passing away of that death-like swoon, and as daylight stole in and the night lamp grew pale, husband and son became more fully aware of the indescribable change which betokens that the end is near.

Restoratives given from time to time told upon her pulse, but not till the first level sunbeam glittered upon the opposite wall, did she rouse sufficiently to speak, and then it was in tones which her husband could only catch by bending over her.

"Am I awake? Have I dreamt that I have seen her,—Zillah, our child?"

"She is safe, beloved one."

"Where? Bring her to me."

"She sleeps in a room near us; and my own wife will try and sleep too, and gather strength to see her when she wakes."

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"Ben Ezra, I do not deceive myself: you, of all others, will not deceive me? There is no rest for weariness like mine but the long sleep of death."

With an inward shudder he laid again his finger on her pulse: the rushing unsteady beat confirmed her words.

"I seemed to have wakened," she said, "from a long, long dream. Passages of it come to me. Sometimes I was a child again, and laughed the gay laugh of childhood; but none laughed with me, and the echo of my lonely mirth made me sadder than ever. Sometimes a horror of great darkness shadowed me—some heartrending grief, I could not name it, it took many forms,—and you, my husband, were away. Ah, how I longed to wake from this nightmare dream, but it held me fast! Strange sounds filled my ears, strange visions passed before my eyes. I cried wildly for help, but none came. Yet at times snatches of sweet songs, or words of holy comfort, reached me through my prison doors, as the captive hears the carol of the lark. One occasion I remember well. I cannot understand it. Surely Ben Ezra's wife dies as she has lived, a faithful daughter of Israel; yet the words which I heard, and which live in my ears yet, were in praise of Jesus of Nazareth. I could even have thought it was from your lips I heard them. I tried to speak, but darkness closed around me, and my tongue refused its office; yet the words remained: 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'"

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She ceased, and closed her eyes in utter exhaustion. Ben Ezra held a cordial to her lips as steadily as his own deep emotion would allow. Ah, he remembered well the day when the words he had learnt from Miriam's book carried conviction to his heart, and were repeated aloud by him in fervent thankfulness as he kept watch beside his wife!

He waited till the cordial had taken effect, and then clasping her transparent hand in both of his, said in low firm tones: "I believe in Jesus of Nazareth—that He is our promised Messiah, that He is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

"You, *you* believe it: then I may rest. *You* have not dreamed, *you* are not deceived. Ah, it is happiness to believe it, for the curse of a broken law is heavy, and I go to stand before my Judge. Tell me more about Him: more about Jesus of Nazareth."

Not in vain had Ben Ezra made the Christian's book his study. The weary and heavy-laden one listened. She took fast hold of instruction: it was her life.

She laid for a time silently; her lips moved as in prayer. "Let me see my children," at length she said. "Does Adriel know these things?"

"Beloved one, Adriel has been my fellow-student. He shares my faith. He is here. Come forward, my son. I will fetch our little Zillah."

"Mother, mother!" cried the young man, as he

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threw himself in passionate grief beside her, and covered her hand with burning kisses, "do not leave us yet!"

"I am so weary, Adriel. Let me go to Him: He will give me rest."

He looked up, and the utter languor printed on the gentle features which had beamed lovingly upon him from earliest infancy, touched him with tender pity.

But this precious season of restored intellect must not pass by without seeking his mother's blessing on the cherished hope of his heart.

"Mother, do you know whose roof shelters us, and that we are the guests of Mrs. Percival and of Signorina Morini? Each sight of her deepens my love, though she knows not of it yet. She has withdrawn from the Church which has oppressed us, she is now of the same faith with my father and myself. Mother, you heard in your long dream snatches of sweet songs, it is likely they were her's, she has tended you with the gentle care of a daughter. I have not presumed yet to speak to her of love, I dare not; what have I to lay at her feet but the whole homage of my heart: yet if the day should ever come when I may venture to woo her, let me feel that my mother's voice to me would have been, 'God prosper thee, my son.'"

"The Lord grant thee thy desires," she said faintly, "and withhold not the request of thy lips; but say thou with our Royal David, 'there is none upon

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earth I desire in comparison of Thee.' Let me now bless thee while I may, my Adriel, my first-born, the son of my vows;" and lifting her trembling hands, she laid them on the young head, and breathed over him the blessing of dying Jewish parents: "God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh. The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious to thee, the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace. Oh, may the Spirit of the Lord rest upon thee, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord."

She had scarcely finished when the door softly opened, and her husband entered with their recovered child in his arms. Miriam followed. A smile played joyously over Deborah's wasted features as she tried to hold her arms out for her darling. As the full rosy lip of health pressed her's she seemed to drink in new life.

"Surely it was not a dream, Ben Ezra, that we lost our child: a dimness comes over my brain when I think of it."

"Think not of it, beloved: you have her here safe, unhurt."

"She will be safe with you. Ah, while I hold her thus to my heart I could wish to live!"

It was a touching sight to see the little creature with her innocent unconsciousness of the orphanage which awaited her, nestling in her mother's arms,

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the ripe beauty of the head with its clustering curls which rested on her shoulder, contrasting with the spiritual outline of Deborah's sharpened features. Mrs. Percival and Juliet, who had just entered the room, stood for a few moments in mute admiration of the lovely picture.

Deborah disengaged a hand from her child and held it out to her friends.

"The God of Israel reward you, Signora." She paused and drew Juliet's small trembling hand in her's. The girl's thoughts had flown back to her father: the last death-bed she had seen was his.

Deborah's earnest wistful gaze recalled her. "My son tells me that you have nursed me with a daughter's tenderness; let me then leave you a mother's blessing." And she uttered a blessing so fervent and solemn that the tears rose to Juliet's eyes.

"Ah, do I see *thee* there: Miriam, my child, thou art safe. God in heaven shield thee still."

Miriam knelt down beside her, but could not speak. Ben Ezra told his wife of the unwearied care with which she had watched her from the first.

But her strength was ebbing rapidly, and the words she tried to utter in reply died upon her lips. Miriam only caught the broken sentence, "Bless thee: be a mother to my little Zillah."

They all watched in silence, for the end seemed very near; her eyes were closed and her breathing

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short and difficult. The arm which still encircled her child drooped powerless upon the bed, but again the dying flame of life shot upward. A lovely expression of peace irradiated her whole countenance. She opened her eyes and fixed them full of conscious love upon her husband: "Farewell, beloved. He taketh away the sins of the world."

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CHAPTER XVIII.

EARTH COMMITTED TO EARTH—PLANS FOR SAFETY—DESIRES ACCOMPLISHED—OLD ACQUAINTANCES RENEWED.

Two days of shaded joy and tempered grief passed over the household of Villa Palestro. The widowed and lonely Ben Ezra could think of his patient sufferer as at rest; for had she not come to Him who gives rest? Had she not looked to Him to whom to look is to be saved? And He who had taken the mother had restored the child. When the waves of grief rose highest, the twining arms and soft caresses of his little Zillah were as oil upon the troubled waters.

But the question which vexed his forefather Abraham must now be solved: "Where shall I bury my dead out of my sight?" Zillah's safety required that no attention should be drawn to Villa Palestro as the refuge of his family and the death-place of his wife; nor could he, with his present belief, have been satisfied with the Jewish ritual and ceremonies of interment.

In the all-absorbing grief of his first hours of

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bereavement, he had made but few inquiries as to the success of the details of the scheme sketched out by Gian Feretti for Zillah's recovery: it was enough for him that he could say, "She was lost, and is found." But on the day after Deborah's death, he heard with gratitude the tale which showed how fully the exiled priest had redeemed his promise. Miriam was the narrator: and to Ben Ezra's question, how he could see and thank the deliverer of his child, Miriam answered: "It is never known, Signor, where the Padre Gian may be found, nor could any letter have been sent to him with safety; but he commissioned Signor Adriel to be in readiness to-morrow at midnight to admit him by the private entrance to the grounds, that he might satisfy his anxiety as to the child's safety, and advise as to her disposal. He did not say where he should spend the intervening time."

After pacing in solitude for half an hour the grove of which we have before spoken, Ben Ezra sought an interview with Mrs. Percival.

She rose and held out her hand to him. The sun which shines out from the rain-cloud is only the brighter when its rays are reflected from dripping leaves and glistening drops; and the habitual gladness of her pleasant smile was but heightened by the tears which fringed her eyelashes.

He stooped to kiss the hand which he held, and to murmur his fervent gratitude for the kindness which had so shared and lightened his burden.

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"The Signora has heard that the Padre Gian will be here to-morrow night?"

Mrs. Percival bowed assent.

"The spirit of my wife is with God who gave it. The dust must return to the earth: but how? where? Shall no voice bless the burial sod? *Signora mia,* where shall I lay my dead?"

"I, too, have thought of this, Signor Luppino. You would gladly have laid her to her last sleep in some sacred enclosure, where the ashes of the departed may wait in peace till the resurrection morning; but, Signor, 'the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; and precious in His sight is the death of His saints.' All consecrated ground is set apart by prayer and praise. The Padre Gian, when he arrives, can thus set apart a quiet resting-place for our friend's earthly remains in some secluded corner of our grove: and while we commit to the earth its kindred dust, we will not doubt but that her flesh shall rest in hope."

This was, in truth, the thought which had possessed Ben Ezra's own mind, and at Mrs. Percival's invitation he went with her to the grove, and chose, with her help, such a spot as he had often pictured with vain longing as a retreat for his sweet wife, when he saw her languishing under the oppressive atmosphere of the Via Rua.

The next morning was spent by him in a necessary visit to Rome, that he might commit some of his patients to Dr. Selwyn's care. He was warned

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by him on no account to show himself in his own house, as Naomi had been alarmed the day before by a domiciliary visit from a sergeant of Carabineers, with two of his men, who produced a warrant to search the house for the person of the catechumen,—Beatrice Luppino. Their search was as useless as it was thorough, and they could obtain no further information from Naomi than that "the family was absent." The sergeant had withdrawn himself and his men, but it was probable that spies lurked about the premises, and that the return of the master of the house might lead to another and more searching investigation.

Wearied and chafed with the persecution, which seemed to leave him no rest for the sole of his foot, he returned to Villa Palestro.

All was in readiness. Peppo's willing hands had dug so deep a grave, that there was little fear it would ever be disturbed; and the earthly remains so dear to Ben Ezra were resting beside it, under a pall of broad fern leaves and white blossoms, arranged by Juliet and Miriam. Beyond the precincts of the villa none knew of Deborah's death.

All then was ready, and by the light of a crescent moon, aided by a few scattered rays from a solitary lantern, the funeral party watched and waited. The hour of midnight was passed: would Padre Gian come? Was he free to come? or had the snare which he had broken open for the child, recoiled and closed upon himself?

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Such anxieties were happily resolved by Adriel's hearing a cautious step approach the private entrance, and the password agreed upon between them was given. He learnt in a few sentences from Adriel of their successful journey from Alatri, and of the duties which now awaited him.

He wrung the hand of Signor Luppino as he approached, and, taking him aside for a few moments, asked him the grounds on which he desired Christian burial for an unbaptized Jewess? On hearing the account of her last hours, he said, "God's ways are past finding out. He hath opened to her the kingdom of heaven: it is not for us to close to her the gates of the Church on earth."

So the simple ceremony proceeded. The dust was restored to the earth from whence it came, and the exiled priest spoke of the home reached by the departed spirit as one who had lingered about its threshold, and caught gleams of its brightness, and heard echoes of its unspeakable words.

The beauty of the night was perfect, and none seemed in haste to leave the spot, now so sacred, but Gian, whose moments were precious, and who desired to see Mrs. Percival before he left the villa. She had yielded to the solicitations of her friends so far as not to encounter the night air, but to share the room in which little Zillah slept, in childish unconsciousness that the sweet face of her mother was being hidden for ever from her view.

Gian breathed a fervent "thank God" as he passed

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the fair child to the couch where Mrs. Percival was reposing. He related briefly what he had picked up at Alatri from the talk of the townspeople. "A child," it was said, "was lost. A sister of the Tor di Specchi had taken her with her to church when she went to confession, and missing her when it was over, had sought her in the neighbourhood. She had been told by a passer-by that another sister of the convent had been seen in charge of the child; she therefore felt easy on her account, and returned at leisure to the Convent Villa; but on arriving there found she had not been heard of. Inquiry was now made in all directions, and various reports were rife. The child," it was said, "was a Jewess, and the Evil One had come to claim his own, and had decoyed her by appearing as a nun." Others said "he had assumed the garb of one of the *frati*, who had been seen to pass rapidly from the church, leaving a sulphurous smell behind him."

Such superstitions might satisfy the unlettered peasantry of Alatri, but Gian was well aware that Luigi di Sforza would come to a truer conclusion, and would see in the sudden disappeance of the child a successful attempt on the part of her friends to recover possession of her. In this opinion he was confirmed when he heard from Mrs. Percival that Signor Luppino's house in the Via Rua had been searched. He highly approved all the cautions which had been observed as to throwing a veil of secrecy over any unusual guests or circumstances at Villa

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Palestro; but though he allowed that, provided all entrusted with the secret remained faithful, the country villa of an English lady would not be readily suspected, he yet urged the extreme importance of placing the child as soon as possible beyond the danger of recapture by removing her beyond the frontiers of the States of the Church.

While he was speaking Juliet entered. Excited and fatigued by the events of the night, she embraced her grandmother without speaking; and taking a low seat beside her, laid her head upon her shoulder. The silken fringes closed over her eyes, and Mrs. Percival thought that she slept, and she therefore pursued in a lowered voice her conversation with Gian Ferretti as to plans for Zillah's safety.

But Juliet was not sleeping: she raised her head, and with the quiet firmness habitual to her said, "*Nonna mia*, let us go to your English home, and take Zillah with us."

"Juliet, my child, could you leave your beautiful Italy?"

"Ah, dear *Nonna*, what should I be but a stranger in the city of priests? One sacred spot I would gladly take away,—my Father's grave." She stopped a moment to check a rising sob. "But for all else I would gladly go. Would it not be to my mother's home and to her native land?"

Mrs. Percival's face kindled with a sudden joy which wakened in her child feelings of self-reproach. How was it she had been so unmindful, as weeks and

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months passed on, that for her sake her grandmother had given up home, and country, and kindred, and never spoke of return? The sacrifice had been made so quietly, so much as a matter of course, that it had escaped her notice.

It was too important a question to be settled till the wearied family and guests had had a few hours of needed repose; but on the following day it was resumed, with the additional help of Dr. Selwyn, who had come to Albano to see his friend. He was anxious to tell him of an interview he had had with Cardinal Antonelli, who had at length returned to Rome.

Dr. Selwyn ignored the escape of the child, and came to complain to His Eminence that her father had been refused to see her at Alatri. "This," he said, "was a breach of the promise made to the members of the British nation, whose protest he had had the honour of presenting."

The Cardinal answered somewhat testily, that rumours had reached him that the child was missing, and that, though she was undoubtedly the property of the Church, more important matters must occupy the attention of the rulers in Church and State, than stretching forth a second time a hand to save from everlasting perdition a child whose friends in England were bent on her ruin.

From this Dr. Selwyn gathered that no very vigorous measures would be used for her recovery, if she could be kept out of the way of the Padre Luigi

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di Sforza. He could recommend nothing better than her early removal to England.

It will scarcely surprise the reader to hear that though Ben Ezra accepted with deep gratitude the present arrangement for his recovered darling, and committed her without hesitation to Mrs. Percival's care, he resolved to bring to an end as speedily as possible his own connection with Rome, and to finish the education of his son, and commence life afresh for himself, in free and Protestant England.

But when our Jewish physican breaks loose from his life in the Ghetto, our own connection with him will draw to a close. We shall at least exchange the continuous history we have endeavoured to pursue of this eventful spring and summer, for two or three glimpses at considerable intervals of time.

We need not give any detailed account of the stolen visit of Gian Ferretti to La Ricola, nor of the unselfish pleasure with which the Contessa Barberini heard of Zillah's rescue and proposed removal to England. Nor do we choose to tell all that passed between Gian and Mrs. Percival, on the night before she took her final leave of Villa Palestro. His communication had apparently been of a nature to awaken her regret, while it heightened almost to reverence, the esteem with which she usually spoke of him.

Through the kindness of Dr. Selwyn, who took upon himself all the business arrangements connected with Signor Medico Luppino's departure from Rome,

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he was able not only to avoid the publicity, which might have been dangerous, but also to rejoin with his son the travellers at Vevay, where they were tempted by the beauty of the early autumn to linger for a short time on their way to England.

Had Mrs. Percival forgotten her caution when she consented thus to enlarge her family circle, and to allow the young people to meet in the free and pleasant intercourse of walks and excursions which she could not always share? or was she reassured by the vigilant control Adriel exercised over any expression of his feelings? or was she won by his dutiful attentions to herself, to admit him into nearer intimacy, and to learn how much in his character the bud of promise still held within its folds? Certain it is, that ere they reached England, she was scarcely less of a mother-friend to Adriel than to Miriam; and yet she never now, in thought or in wish, blended into one their future destinies.

Signor Luppino had confided to Mrs. Percival his wish, on their arrival in England, to make a public profession of his faith; and by her hospitable desire, they continued to be her guests, that the ceremony might take place in the parish which contained her English home.

Truly the word had been made good to her: "He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." She called to mind her hurried and anxious departure, less than a year ago,

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at her son-in-law's summons. Memory might not indeed dwell with hope or comfort upon him. His "harvest might be said to have past, his summer to have ended," before her arrival; but in other hearts, what precious results!

Her heart swelled with gratitude as she stood by the font, her sweet grandchild beside her sharing her faith; while kneeling in reverent adoration before Jesus of Nazareth, she saw the group, of father, son, maiden, and little child, receive the visible token of His covenant of grace.

Two years more passed by. Dr. Luppino had established himself in the London house once occupied by his friend Dr. Selwyn; and, thanks in part to his recommendations, but still more to the medical reputation which had followed him from Rome, he was becoming every day more sought and appreciated. His adopted daughter, Miriam Costello, filled the place of mother-sister to his little Zillah. Adriel was but little at home, for he was pursuing his studies with a zest which bid fair to distance his competitors.

At length the day came which should determine his final position. His father and Miriam counted the hours which must elapse from the publication of the examination list till his arrival with the news. But Adriel did not come, and the night closed in upon their uncertainty.

The morning brought a letter, bearing the well-known mark of Mrs. Percival's post-town. It ran thus: "Forgive me that the news of my success was

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not first told to you. I dared to hope that by coming here first, I should be able to ask your congratulations on that which has for years past summed up all my hopes of earthly happiness. Father, you and Miriam have been the confidantes of my cherished wish: you will understand the depth of my gratitude to God and to her, when I say that Juliet Morini is mine. Oh, that my mother had lived to see this day!"

And a little word inclosed, in a delicate Italian hand, reminded Signor Luppino of a prophetic blessing which had once been breathed over her by dying lips: "*She* gave me a mother's blessing; *you* will not refuse, for Adriel's sake, to take the orphan child to your heart."

The packet had been hastily opened by eager hands; and not till Dr. Luppino had left the room and the house, did Miriam observe that a part of its contents had fallen out unobserved. With a little cry of joy she picked up a closely written letter, from Juliet to herself.

She was glad it had escaped the Doctor's notice: it would have grieved her to deny him a sight of it; yet the admonition to *privacy* was conspicious even on the outside, and fidelity to her friend demanded that it should be observed.

Will Juliet ever forgive us for making it public? Ah, the world is full of Juliets! Each thinks she is making low sweet melody to herself, while in truth she adds but one to a full chorus. The language of

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the heart, like that of music, is universal. We are free to confess indeed, that we are speaking of our own sex,—the other has probably its own way of understanding these things; but to any of our own sex who *may* share, or *do* share, or *have shared* Juliet's feelings, we believe we shall stand excused for venturing to divulge them. The letter ran thus:—

"*Maria mia*, he says you have known it for long: to me it is so bright, so new, so radiant. Yes! but they are *his* feelings which you have known: can I tell you mine? They lie so deep: I have only half told them to myself; yet I will try.

"Ah, you remember the old times when I first knew you! how long ago they seem! I thought my love was all buried in one grave, then God asked me for my heart, and when I gave it to Him it became again mine, filled with new love and power: but I did not love Adriel: I loved only my *Nonna* and you, *Maria mia*. I only saw him from a distance, till his mother's death,—then his tenderness and grief spoke to me. I too had had such feelings. I was very sorry for him: I told him so. It seemed quite simple to do so, but his face at my words became bright with joy. I was glad I could give him comfort; but I did not understand it then!

"When did I begin to understand it? When we were at Vevay I saw much of him. You were so worthy, *Maria mia*, to be the chosen companion of Dr. Luppino, and little Zillah never left her father's side, and so, Adriel and I, we were together. There

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was one subject we had in common: no one had yet listened so unweariedly when I spoke in my father's praise, and the devotion of a son to his mother has in itself a moral beauty which has a charm for all. But we talked of other things. He had such high hopes for his country—for his people. They seemed to me ambitious, extravagant. We had our little discussions: when I differed from him, it gave him such pain,—his look was so anxious,—could I help asking myself, 'Why does he care that I should think with him?' Then he brought his book of the Holy Prophets. The Hebrew tongue is so grand, so fit to tell God's will: he showed me he only hoped for what God has promised. Then my feelings as a Roman maiden quite, *quite* changed. I had despised the Jews, now I saw no people on the earth would be so high or would have God so near them, when once they turned to their Messiah. To be a Christian Jew seemed to me the highest of all ranks. You did not know it, *Maria mia;* but in those days at Vevay, how I envied you your race! Did I envy you anything else? I think not,—I was happy in being Adriel's *friend.* I believed, though some things puzzled me, that *you* were something more.

"I believed it till we reached England, and till the day of baptism: up to that time the friendship had been growing very strong; the pleasure it gave me seemed so safe, and so good for me. Was it unnatural, unmaidenly, on that day to offer a friend's congratulations, to link your name with his, and rejoice with

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him that you and he had made profession of one faith? Ah, *Maria mia*, how the words troubled him which were meant to give him only pleasure! Did the discovery of my error trouble only him? All had been peace in my soul before, in the belief that he belonged to you: every tempestuous feeling was hushed; the friendship which had become so much to me rode safely at anchor in a quiet harbour. Now all was changed. Has any one felt before as I have done from that day till Adriel came to tell me all? Not you, *Maria mia:* you would know better how to govern your heart. Memory brought forth each treasured act and look, and questioned its import: only one answer seemed a key to unlock all; yet, if it were so, why was no word spoken? and no one, not even my *Nonna*, must suspect the tumultuous thoughts which heaved and surged in her child's bosom. Ah, Maria! can you imagine what it has been to go from him to her to-night, and pour out the pent up heart? In all that time of waiting I had never dared to speak his name in her hearing, lest I should betray myself; and to find, too, that *her* silence had never meant indifference to my Adriel,—that she had read in his noble heart even better than I, and had interpreted aright the honourable silence which had cost me so much.

"Ah, it seems as if such days as I have passed through can never, never return! I cannot be lonely any more while my Adriel is spared to me. You do not think me selfish for telling you how happy I am?"

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No: Miriam did not think her selfish; the joy of her friend was to her a source of pure and unmixed happiness, not for Juliet's sake only, but for that of the whole Luppino family. It would be impertinent to inquire whether any circumstances in her own history enabled her to sympathize more deeply in the trial of suspense which Juliet so innocently confessed.

One glimpse more, and it shall be our last. We again pass over an interval, which must be counted by years, and it is now a few months after Juliet's marriage. An Autumn evening has closed in. It has been pleasant to deaden the sound of a moaning wind and continuous rain, with shutters and curtains. Lamp and firelight combine to lend a cheerful glow to Dr. Luppino's study, where, when they are alone, he and Miriam are wont to spend the evening. Zillah is no longer a babe, but still, by the laws of health, which *ought* to be (we will not say whether they *are*) observed in a doctor's house, she keeps early hours. Miriam has paused in her reading, for she hears suspicious sounds, which betoken that the attention of her hearer is suspended. She lays down her book, and looks fondly at the parental friend enjoying his well-earned repose, after days and years of toil. She pictures to herself the privilege of ministering to increasing wants and infirmities, as age creeps upon him. Then her thoughts wander to Juliet. Perhaps some of the thoughts which maidens never confess, began to take shape in her reverie; but she was startled from it by an appeal to door-

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bell and knocker. "A summons for the physician, no doubt," thought she: "pity that the rest which so refreshed him should be broken."

No: it was an arrival; and before Dr. Luppino was quite sure whether it was dream or reality, Dr. Selwyn stood before him, with Gian Ferretti.

With what a clasp he seized Miriam's hand. How strange to her it seemed to be addressed by the long disused title, "Signorina da Costa."

Dr. Selwyn explained that in an obscure village to which he had himself retired for a short season of rest, he had been requested by a peasant woman to prescribe for a poor traveller, who had, as she said, sunk down at her door the night before. In the traveller he recognized Gian Ferretti. Severe illness, followed by unremitted labour and semi-starvation, had brought him to the brink of the grave, and for weeks the combined skill and care of Dr. Selwyn failed to do more than keep the flickering flame from total extinction.

At length a naturally good constitution prevailed; but his convalescence was yet in an early stage, when Dr. Selwyn received from his wife an extract she had cut out of the *Osservatore Romano*, the Papal paper in Rome, which had spared in its limited space of 18 inches by 12, a whole column to the denunciation of a regenade priest, who was said to be presenting himself under various disguises, and disseminating among the faithful heresies condemned by the Holy Father and the Councils of the Holy Roman and

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Apostolic Church: he had, it was said, even perverted the confessional from its sacred use, and made it an occasion of diffusing his heretical notions. All priests were bidden to beware of him; and the faithful were admonished, that to fail in delivering him over to the punishment he merited, would be to make themselves partakers of his deadly sin.

The description could point to none but Gian Ferretti: that such was his name, and that he was identical with the former leader in the ranks of the popular army, appeared to be yet unknown to the Papal authorities. But no time was to be lost; slow as was the transmission of police intelligence in the states of the Church fifteen years ago, compared with the promptitude which in our own time and in our own land makes it a hairbreath matter for a criminal to escape, Dr. Selwyn knew well, that within a few days, double vigilance would be exercised on the frontiers. The village where he had been staying was happily near the confines of the Papal States; and, without communicating his reasons to his patient, he removed him at his own cost, and with a degree of luxury, suited indeed to his weakened condition, but which would effectually put off the scent any who might be on the watch for a poor fugitive priest. He himself acted the part of travelling physician.

When he had placed him in safety, he explained to the astonished Gian the motives of his conduct. But he had now a degree of opposition to meet with

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on which he had not calculated. The danger from which he had so hastily removed him, was one with which Gian had become so long familiar as the expected end of his self-chosen life of peril, that to have been snatched from it, seemed to him almost like bidding him put back to sea in the vessel which was about to enter the harbour.

"My Church! my country!" he said. "They are fallen, but they are mine still: to live for them while I might, and then to die for them; I have had no other aim."

But by degrees he learnt that even self-sacrifice must be unmingled with self-will, and that One only had power over his life to lay it down, or take it again as it pleased Him. Finally, he was persuaded to accompany Dr. Selwyn to England, and to seek among the Italians of London for benighted ones to whom he could convey the light of life.

His indefatigable friend did not leave him till he had secured to him both a position and a maintenance in the country of his adoption.

That Dr. Luppino and his adopted daughter should be numbered among his friends and supporters was a matter of course. Our readers, especially the younger ones, will indulge their surmises as to the motives of his frequent visits to the house of the Jewish physician, but our story is ended, and we have nothing further to say on the subject.

THE END.

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